

# **Operational Art, Some Principles of Maritime Strategy, and the Operational Employment of the U.S. Army's Objective Force**

**A Monograph  
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## Abstract

A SAMS MONOGRAPH by CDR Kenneth A Szmed Jr., U.S. Navy, 61 pages.

This monograph is about theory and the use of theory to develop doctrine. In light of the dramatic capabilities envisioned for the “Objective Force,” the organized U.S. military mechanism of physical coercion, and the dynamic operational environment that characterizes the world of 2002, land and naval theory is examined, investigated and analyzed.

A common perception is that maritime strategy and land strategy exist in discrete and separate spheres of knowledge. However, closer analysis demonstrates that they do not exist as independent areas of study, rather, they are merely divisions in the overall art of war.

To develop and illustrate this concept, a general overview of the future threat/operational environment and the proposed characteristics and capabilities of the U.S. Army’s Objective Force are presented. Manifest from this description of the Objective Force and the future threat, an apparent analogy between the Objective Force and a naval force becomes evident, even while it is increasingly apparent that technological advances are blurring the traditional distinctions between the divisions in the art of war – between land, sea and air warfare. The functional divisions are becoming less distinct, increasingly interrelated and integrated.

Through this analogy to maritime operations, the following two constructs or paradigms are proposed to help guide the development of doctrine in the theoretical employment of the U.S. Army’s Objective Force.

1. The “object” or goal of Objective Force warfare is command of the white space, in other words, “freedom of action.” Objective Force commanders must act to retain and preserve freedom of action. This must be the theoretical basis for all doctrine.
2. The corollary of this is to preserve the “force in being.” Objective Force commanders must employ maritime concepts to understand and govern the reasoned concentration and dispersal of forces.

In combination, the concepts are related thusly, the core object or goal of Objective Force warfare is to control, that is, to exercise and retain ones freedom of action... this is the essence of the maritime concept “fleet in being.”

The arguments presented throughout are based on the demonstration of analogy between naval and Objective Force land warfare. The line of logic to the conclusion reached is that maneuver warfare was developed broadly to counter and defeat the inherent strength of the defense on land. Operational maneuver concepts were the ultimate expression of maneuver and the solution to industrialized, mass attrition warfare between nation-states. Objective Force maneuver is the embodiment and realization of operational maneuver, the basis of which is the exploitation and retention of “freedom of action.”

Freedom of action is therefore the essential, core criteria in any concept or theory that applies to or governs Objective Force employment. Evidence has substantiated the analogy between the characteristics of naval forces and Objective Forces. Theoretical and conceptual reasoning and arguments have demonstrated that freedom of action, that is, control of maritime communications or command of the sea has been the central construct in maritime strategy as well. The analogous core criteria, freedom of action, demonstrate that maritime concepts may be applied confidently to Objective Force employment.

Assuming the inherent capabilities of the Objective Force are achieved; given the projected characteristics of the future operating environment... If maritime concepts were applied to Objective Force employment, the resulting operational actions would be consistent, as envisioned, to address and counter effectively the future threats in the future operating environment.

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# INTRODUCTION

Theory is an attempt to codify the teleological nature of man. Theory is man's attempt to utilize the past; apply to the present, in order to predict the future. Theory captures and attempts to explain past events; focuses those explanations through a lens of current affairs, in an effort to predict future conditions. Past events are the input – predictions of future outcomes are the output of this theoretical process. According to Robert Leonhard, retired U.S. Army officer and contemporary military theorist, "theory seeks to explain the past in order to predict the future."<sup>1</sup>

Theory, to be of value, must offer useful predictions of the future. Theory analyzes past events in an attempt to explain them and to establish causal relationships. Establishing causality is the key to accurate prediction. To establish causality and to formulate theory, ideally, the more complete and accurate the past data the theorist is able to analyze, the better the theory and the better the theory should predict reality. A would-be theorist is warned however, that an endless search for facts, more evidence or still more conclusive data would never result in a theory, but rather, merely result in endless academic exercise.

Establishing causality and creating theory however, is not just about collecting data. Robert Leonhard further points out two very important qualifications regarding theory. First, that theory predicts, but makes no claim as to absolute accuracy or precision. Second, that military theory falls squarely within the realm of the social sciences. As such, its prediction does not (or should not) connote the mathematical rigor of pure scientific theory. Unlike the physical sciences, the social sciences must contend constantly with reactive data – that is, human subjects that continually change their behavior in reaction to a myriad of stimuli.<sup>2</sup> Leonhard's arguments are intended to show that every professional can and must theorize – their efforts must not be

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<sup>1</sup> Robert R. Leonhard, Fighting by Minutes, Time and the Art of War (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994), xix.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., xxi.

discouraged or dissuaded by the efforts of cynical critics “who are always ready to debunk others’ theories but who curiously have none of their own to offer.”<sup>3</sup>

Leonhard’s views regarding the totality, or conclusiveness and permanence of theory are strongly consistent with the views of the distinguished author Samuel P. Huntington. Writing in response to critics of the controversial theory contained in The Clash of Civilizations and The Remaking of World Order, Huntington declared: “the test of its meaningfulness and usefulness is not whether it accounts for everything. . . Obviously it does not. The test is whether it provides a more meaningful and useful lens through which to view. . . [the subject of the theory] than any alternative paradigm.”<sup>4</sup> The most important step in evaluating theory then is not necessarily to establish its absolute validity, but rather, to judge its absolute utility. If a theory is of utility, it can and should be considered sufficient.

According to the U.S. Army’s newest capstone doctrinal manual FM 3-0, Operations, published in June 2001, “doctrine is the concise expression of how Army forces contribute to unified action in campaigns, major operations, battles and engagements... Army doctrine describes the Army’s approach and contributions to full spectrum operations on land.”<sup>5</sup> The definition goes on to explain that Army doctrine is authoritative but not prescriptive. This is an important distinction. In the military, doctrine is produced at the senior levels of the organization and flows downward to subordinates. It is sometimes said that doctrine is the opinion of the senior officer present, nevertheless, doctrine guides and unites a military organization. The Soviet military theorist, A.A. Svechin, called doctrine the “the rudder of the army.” Robert Leonhard metaphorically referred to doctrine as the “glue” that binds an organization together. Doctrine serves manifestly to guide the development of weapons and weapon systems, the organization and administration of armies and the training of soldiers and leaders.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., xx.

<sup>4</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 14.

If doctrine is the vehicle that unites an organization, theory, conversely is the instrument that results in division and controversy. While the army's hierarchy develops doctrine, any soldier can develop and espouse theory. Indeed, Leonhard explains that anyone and everybody can theorize. "Theory is the product of individual reason aimed at summoning and changing the future, and it frequently conflicts with doctrine. [whereas] Doctrine is the organizational wisdom designed to ordain the present."<sup>6</sup> Paul Herbert, U.S. Army historian, expressed a similar opinion. Herbert explains that doctrine is an agent of institutional leadership. Herbert added that doctrine reflects uniquely the time in which it was created; it responds to the contemporary fiscal, political, social, military and technological realities of the environment – as these change, so must doctrine. As such, for doctrine to be of any utility, it must be a vigorous, living body of ideas, vice a stagnant article of permanent inviolable law. Herbert maintained that doctrine, in effect, could be defined as an institutional choice between competing ideas. Effective doctrine requires a continual and deliberate state of study, critique, analysis, and refinement to which all organizations involved participate.<sup>7</sup>

The inescapable conclusion is that an effective army needs both theory and doctrine. Doctrine is needed to provide an authoritative basis for unified action. Theory is needed to solve new problems, lay the foundation for future doctrine, and ultimately, to overturn current doctrine. Robert Leonhard observed that lacking a dynamic process of theory development, doctrine analysis, open review, critique and renewal an army will follow its current doctrine until it experiences a tragic failure. Leonhard concluded the ultimate purpose of theory is to change current doctrine through intellectual exploration rather than through the "bloody empiricism"<sup>8</sup> of a first battle conflict.

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<sup>5</sup> Department of the Army Field Manual 3-0, Operations (Washington D.C.: Department of the Army, 2001), 1-14.

<sup>6</sup> Robert R. Leonhard, Fighting by Minutes, Time and the Art of War (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994), xxi.

<sup>7</sup> Paul Herbert, Deciding What Has to Be Done: General William E. DePuy and the 1976 Edition of FM 100-5, Operations (Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, U.S. Army CGSC, 1988), 106-107.

<sup>8</sup> Robert R. Leonhard, Fighting by Minutes, Time and the Art of War (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994), xxi.

This monograph is about theory – and the use of theory to develop doctrine. Theory is examined, investigated, and analyzed in light of the dramatic capabilities envisioned for the “Objective Force,” the organized U.S. military mechanism of physical coercion, and in light of the dynamic operational environment that characterizes the world today. In the quest for solutions to these problems, intellectual curiosity, a capacity for critical analysis and academic rigor are all necessary ingredients, of these, perhaps the most important single ingredient however, is an open, inquiring mind. It would be wise to recall the caution of Frederick the Great, “practice without theory and reflection dwindles into unsatisfactory routine.” Before moving into a theoretical discussion however, a basic understanding of the future operating environment and the capabilities of the future force one would employ in this environment is necessary.



# CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS

## THE FUTURE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

The “operating environment” is quite literally the defining variable that prescribes not only the nature of the conflict, but the nature of the forces involved in that conflict. The corollary to this declaration is that the force that is either best able or who is most predisposed or inclined to exploit the operating environment is most often the force that achieves its goals. The future operating environment should then, define the broad requirements of the future (objective) force.

In June, 2000, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Henry H. Shelton, conveyed a strategic vision for the Armed Forces of the United States. That strategic vision statement, Joint Vision (JV) 2020, specified key aspects of the future global strategic environment that have significant implications for U.S. Armed Forces. This document maintained that the United States will continue to have global interests and will continue to be engaged with a variety of regional actors in an era of increasing globalization. It declared that U.S. Armed Forces must be prepared to fight and win across the full range of military operations in any part of the world, to operate with multinational forces, and to coordinate military operations with both governmental and international agencies. JV 2020 asserted and cautioned that potential adversaries will have access to the global commercial industrial base and, as a result, enjoy access to much of the same technological capabilities as U.S. military forces at low costs. As a result, JV 2020 concluded that U.S. forces can expect to neither possess nor maintain a wide technological advantage over potential adversaries. Lastly and perhaps most importantly, JV 2020 projected that potential adversaries can be expected to adapt rapidly as U.S. capabilities evolve. The U.S. can logically expect potential adversaries to develop asymmetrical approaches and niche warfare capabilities to counter U.S. conventional military strengths. JV 2020 warned that the potential of such

asymmetrical approaches to counter conventional U.S. dominance is perhaps the most serious danger to the U.S. security.<sup>9</sup>

The vision of the future contained within JV 2020 is consistent with the strategic vision of its precursor, Joint Vision 2010, established by the previous Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General John M. Shalikashvili in July 1996. In this strategic vision statement, General Shalikashvili established an initial template to guide all the Armed Service's transformation efforts to prepare them for the future operating environment. In doing so, JV 2010 outlined potential key adversarial capabilities and characteristics. JV 2010 stated prophetically that, "greater global interaction will strongly influence the nature of future threats. Wider access to advanced technology along with weaponry, including weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and the requisite skills to employ it, will increase the number of actors with sufficient military potential to upset existing regional balances of power."<sup>10</sup> JV 2020 is a logical extension of the joint framework established in JV 2010.

Another authoritative statement offered additional guidance, the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), published in September 2001, also addressed the global security environment. The QDR is a comprehensive and exhaustive defense department study sponsored by the Secretary of Defense, supported by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the Joint Staff, the Services, Combatant Commanders, and senior leaders of the Defense Department. The purpose of the QDR was to establish a foundation for America's defense strategy. The QDR examined current and future threats to U.S. national security and interests and identified a broad range of military requirements necessary to counter those threats – thereby establishing a foundation for determining the size and structure of the force. These recommendations were used as the starting point to determine how to best man, train, organize and equip the total force. This methodology

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<sup>9</sup> Department of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Vision 2020 (Washington D.C., 2000), 5-6.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., XX.

resulted in an outline of key changes necessary to extend America's influence and preserve America's safety and security in the years to ahead.<sup>11</sup>

The QDR declared the United States as challenged by both state and non-state adversaries who possessed a wide range of military and advanced technological capabilities. It echoed JV 2020's assertions that adversaries would employ asymmetric approaches and methods of warfare to counter U.S. conventional superiority. U.S. adversaries would possess and could employ weapons of mass destruction unpredictably in response to regional/strategic developments. The QDR added that technological advancements coupled with the increasing globalization of commerce and communications will significantly enhance any adversary's military capabilities by integrating widely available off-the-shelf technologies into existing military weapons, communications, surveillance and intelligence systems.

The QDR depicted a highly volatile geopolitical environment that is increasingly complex, inherently unstable and unpredictable. Unpredictable regional security developments, increased challenges and threats from weak or failing states, increased political influence and military capabilities of non-state actors, singly and in combination, attest that the United States, or any nation for that matter, will not be able to develop military forces, capabilities or plans optimized to counter a single, specific adversary in a specific geographic area. Rather, the QDR specified that the United States must possess a highly versatile, flexible and responsive force, capable of intervening in unexpected crisis anywhere in the world against opponents who possess a diverse range of capabilities.<sup>12</sup>

In response to the challenges of JV 2020 as well as an increasing awareness and growing concern over the realism of the Army's threat based training, the U.S. Army's Training and

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<sup>11</sup> The central objective of the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) was to shift the basis of defense planning from a "threat based" model that has dominated military planning to a "capabilities based" model for the future. In doing this, the QDR established clear guidelines which are intended to drive changes in the force structure to counter future threats to U.S. security and national interests.

<sup>12</sup> Department of Defense, Secretary of Defense, Quadrennial Defense Review (Washington D.C., September 2001), 3-7.

Doctrine Command (TRADOC) began charting a course to review and revise completely the Army's definition of the threat representative of the contemporary operating environment. As a result, in February 2000, TRADOC's office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence (DCSINT) produced an exhaustive white paper study titled, Capturing the Operational Environment.

DCSINT's objective was to critically examine and capture the current and future operational environment for U.S. military operations.<sup>13</sup> This seminal document defined and depicted the potential operating environment that U.S. forces will confront, the enemy military capabilities that will characterize this environment and the operating paradigms and principals that will characterize threat operations. TRADOC's overarching objective in sponsoring this study however, was to integrate its findings into all aspects of U.S. Army training, and in particular, the Army's Combat Training Centers (CTC), and their Battle Command Training Program (BCTP). The TRADOC study reiterated the common themes found in JV 2010 and JV 2020, however, it went much further – making innovative projections of the future operating environment. Primary responsibility for achieving TRADOC's objective of incorporating the results of their study into all aspects of the Army's training environment however went to the TRADOC DCSINT's Threat Support Directorate (TSD). The capabilities, variables and methods of operation contained in the TRADOC study would serve as a construct, or as the building blocks for the development a new threat that would be used as the benchmark for the future training of U.S. military forces.

The TSD was directed to develop an entirely new series of field Army manuals that would authoritatively describe the contemporary opposing force (OPFOR) that was representative of the

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<sup>13</sup> Debating the nature of the future operating environment is well beyond the scope of this monograph. The Chairman's JV 2010 and 2020, the QDR and TRADOC's studies are authoritative statements taken prima facie. Notably, TRADOC's white paper, Capturing the Operational Environment, of 2 February 2000, appears the definitive argument. It is one of TRADOC's earliest, as well as their most thoroughly researched and documented treatise on the subject. It is apparently the core document from which several similar papers were generated. The numerous, authoritative, primary sources used to produce this study read like a "who's who" in national security/strategic studies and U.S. foreign policy, e.g., The White House, National Defense University's Institute for National Security Studies, U.S. Army War College's

contemporary operating environment. Work began in July 2000; by August 2001, the TSD had officially published the first (draft) of the new FM 7-100 series of U.S. Army Field Manuals. The FM 7-100 series developed is a thoroughly comprehensive series of six (6) authoritative manuals encompassing all aspects of the contemporary opposing force and its operating environment. The entire series thoroughly detailed and described the projected OPFOR's doctrinal framework and strategy, the operations and tactics, how the OPFOR would interact with paramilitary and nonmilitary organizations; as well provided an overall organizational guide and a Worldwide Equipment Guide (WWEG), which described the diverse variety of weapons and equipment employed by contemporary OPFOR.

Following publication of TRADOC's initial white paper of February 2000, two additional white papers, each appearing to be somewhat of a distilled summary of its precursor, were produced by TRADOC. The first, Future Operational and Threat Environment: A View of the World in 2015, was produced in April, 2000. A shorter, succinct paper, produced by TRADOC DCSINT in May 2001, simply titled The Future Operational Environment, was intended apparently for broader dissemination to a wider audience.

All three of these TRADOC white paper studies as well as the FM 7-100 series of Army Field Manuals described common themes, concepts or features of the future operational environment. All three universally maintained that U.S. forces will operate in a geo-strategic environment of considerable instability and uncertainty. In this future strategic environment, regional powers will grow in political and economic influence; internationally new powers will emerge, while concurrently transnational actors will increasingly exert influence on the geopolitical landscape. The driving forces of population demographics, economics and technology will inexorably alter the balance of power within regions and internationally. At the same time, increasing globalization will compel, indeed, require, international integration and interaction on an

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Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, U.S. Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, the Rand Corporation, et. al.. The reader may refer to this document for further information.

unprecedented level in human history. This interaction will create friction as cultures, religions, governments and economies collide and compete in a global arena.

Using historical precedents, the TRADOC white papers predicted unequivocally that “violence on national transnational, and sub-national levels will continue over the next twenty years and beyond. This translates to relative certainty that over the next twenty years, at least one or more states will employ violent force as a method for achieving a national goal or endstate.”<sup>14</sup> The realities of this challenging, dynamic environment virtually guarantees that U.S. Armed Forces will remain engaged in a wide variety of mission and operations. U.S. Forces must therefore remain ready to fight and dominate across the full spectrum of conflict, against any adversary, in any environment.

As the world’s sole current superpower, the United States possesses the inherent ability to alter the balance of power in any region through the application of military force. However, TRADOC studies have concluded that military supremacy alone or in combination with other elements of national power will not necessarily prove sufficient to prevent an adversarial nation from pursuing interests that are counter to U.S. interests or goals. Even though the U.S. can eventually dominate a conventional military situation, the inherent characteristics of U.S. military forces and operations remain largely predictable, slow and vulnerable. These shortcomings have lead many adversaries to conclude that they can create local conditions that permit military operations within their regions, below a certain level or “threshold” that would produce a U.S. military response. Operating below the level that would trigger a U.S. military response requires that adversaries: 1. Attempt to conduct operations at a rapid operational tempo in order to conclude hostilities as quickly as possible; 2. Disproportionately increase the potential risks to

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<sup>14</sup> Department of the Army, Training and Doctrine Command White Paper, The Future Operational Environment (Ft. Monroe, VA, 2001), 1. see also Training and Doctrine Command White Paper, Future Operational and Threat Environment (Ft. Monroe, VA, 2000), 2. same reference with slightly different wording.

U.S. forces by any means or methods (e.g. threat of weapons of mass destruction), and 3.

Concurrently marginalize their own force's risk to U.S. standoff attacks.

Adversaries recognize that U.S. national military strategy is based broadly on the theory or concept of "gradual escalation" in response to issues that involve U.S. national interests. An adversary can successfully exploit this type strategy by simply employing a concerted strategy designed to keep their military operations below the level that would elicit a U.S. response.

A strategy founded on gradual escalation requires time to be successful. Diplomatic, economic and informational methods aimed at inducing or compelling an opponent to yield to U.S. interests takes time to be effective. When time intensive informational and economic methods are utilized without concurrent military means to compel a rapid decision, the time allowed for non-military effects to be realized provides the ideal opportunity for opponents to achieve their objectives. Adversaries are keenly aware that the longer they can delay an effective U.S. response, the greater their chances for success.

The United States, though possessing unsurpassed conventional military strength, does not possess currently the military means to rapidly force a decision in the early stages of any regional crisis. The U.S. strategy of gradual escalation must typically transition gradually through a process of increased presence and force build-up, to an air and missile campaign, to limited attack, and finally, to full dimensional operations. The slow, predictable nature of these military operations greatly increases an adversary's opportunities to deter U.S. efforts and places U.S. Forces at substantially increased risk. The lack of an inherent U.S. military capability to execute any other strategic option provides adversaries the opportunity to accurately predict the nature, scope and timing of a U.S. military response.

The inability of U.S. Forces to conduct full dimensional decisive operations, rapidly, at the outset of a crisis is a recognized shortfall in U.S. military capability. This shortfall affords adversaries the greatest single opportunity to oppose or preclude U.S. involvement and to achieve regional goals. This acknowledged deficiency in contemporary U.S. Forces is one of the greatest

single drivers in future force requirements. “Adversaries recognize that defeating the U.S. is not a matter of winning battles; rather it is a factor of not losing the military means necessary to remain in power, while pursuing strategic victory through other instruments.”<sup>15</sup>

If U.S. Forces are successful in defeating or mitigating an adversary’s strategic and operational exclusion efforts, the U.S. will face a determined adversary whose military forces are optimized for the physical environment unique to their particular geographic region. Adversarial forces may possess unique hybrid weapon systems – weapon systems that possess dramatic military capabilities which have been achieved through the incorporation and/or integration of high technologies into older conventional systems. Adversaries will focus on employing asymmetrical and adaptive operational concepts against U.S. Forces. The overall strategy of any potential U.S. adversary can perhaps best be explained simply as a strategy of indirect approach with adaptive constructs.

It has been projected that future adversaries will possess unique and robust military capabilities and employ novel patterns of military operations. Having studied and learned from U.S. experiences in Korea, Vietnam, Panama, the Persian Gulf, Somalia, the Balkans and Kosovo, as well as Soviet/Russian experiences in Afghanistan and Chechnya, aggressor states are developing capable, professional militaries and incorporating unique adaptive strategies.

The development or evolution of unique military capabilities and strategies is increasingly analogous to a process of natural selection. An adversaries strategies and capabilities are a product of an aggressor’s particular physical and political environment, culture/religion as well as the perceived threats. By design or selection, adversaries employing asymmetric, adaptive strategies will seek to exploit perceived U.S. vulnerabilities and to counter or mitigate U.S. conventional strengths. TRADOC’s white paper reports delineated common foreign perceptions of traditional U.S. vulnerabilities as “unwillingness to accept heavy losses, risk-aversion that will

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<sup>15</sup> Department of the Army, Training and Doctrine Command White Paper, The Future Operational Environment (Ft. Monroe, VA, 2001), 6.



result in avoidance of close combat and reliance on stand-off capabilities, sensitivity of national leadership to domestic and world opinion, lack of commitment over time, and predictable patterns of military operations”<sup>16</sup>. Additionally, since the U.S. military is largely a conventional power projection force, it is tied inexorably to an operational construct that requires entry operations and a slow deliberate build-up of force capabilities for contingency response – operations that are highly vulnerable to either interdiction or some degree of denial. These common perceptions of U.S. vulnerabilities have helped TRADOC envision some likely enemy actions designed to exploit those vulnerabilities:

- Development of capabilities to deny, limit, interrupt or delay U.S. entry and disrupt subsequent actions within the area of operations.
- Deliberate actions designed to create mass casualties.
- Employment of multiple means – political, economic, military and informational to undermine the coherence of allies and coalitions.
- Offsetting U.S. strengths by countering high-tech advantages, often with low-tech methods of specific niche capabilities.
- Adoption of unpredictable operational methods with rapid transition to conventional operations when decision is assured.
- Conducting technical exploitation of command and control nodes, networks and systems.
- Increasing standoff distances through exclusion or other means to protect forces and capabilities.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 7. see also Training and Doctrine Command White Paper, Future Operational and Threat Environment (Ft. Monroe, VA, 2000), 12.

- Maintaining and preserving viable conventional military capabilities to destroy enemy forces, secure territory, and maintain regime security.<sup>17</sup>

Though TRADOC's list is general in nature and lacks specific detail, it provides key insights into the potential design requirements for future U.S. Force capabilities as well as their method of employment.

In any future conflict, it is likely that the U.S. will maintain an overwhelming superiority in air and maritime forces. However, advances in integrated air and missile defense systems, active and passive sensor technology will make medium to high altitude air operations increasingly vulnerable. In addition, naval mines, advanced surface-to-surface missiles and diesel submarines will have a similar impact on naval operations in littoral areas. In short, accelerating widespread technological proliferation will enable both state and non-state actors alike unprecedented access to weapons of mass destruction, ballistic and cruise missile technology, precision munitions and informational warfare capabilities. These capabilities could potentially give any future adversary a decidedly decisive advantage in a regional conflict/crisis and enable them to effectively delay a conventional U.S. military response or intervention effort.

It was noted that potential adversaries have learned from historic example; they realize the longer they can delay an effective U.S. response, the greater their chances for success. Assuming operations designed to strategically and operationally exclude U.S. Forces fail or are only marginally successful, TRADOC projected that potential adversaries will subsequently attempt to directly degrade and attack U.S. force projection assets and infrastructure. Potential adversaries will attempt to hold initial military gains and extend the conflict in time while preserving their own military capabilities. Keenly aware of vulnerability to U.S. air and standoff precision strike capabilities, opponents will avoid massing forces and eschew operating in traditional linear

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<sup>17</sup> Department of the Army, Training and Doctrine Command White Paper, The Future Operational Environment (Ft. Monroe, VA, 2001), 8. see also Training and Doctrine Command White Paper, Future Operational and Threat Environment (Ft. Monroe, VA, 2000), 13.

offensive or defensive dispositions. Adversaries will favor highly selective, rapid tactical and operational maneuvers from areas of refuge against U.S. precision effects.

Opponents will disperse and operate forces from areas of physical and moral sanctuary, often in complex terrain and urban environments, to reduce their exposure to U.S. targeting efforts. From these defensive areas of sanctuary the enemy will coordinate precision fires and direct mobile formations in time and space to strike carefully selected targets designed to display U.S. vulnerability, create casualties, and/or to degrade or destroy specific U.S. capabilities.

The enemy force will attempt to initiate battle at a time and place of their choosing, integrating decentralized execution of non-linear maneuver and precision fires with simultaneous operations by unconventional and special purpose forces. The overall “effect will be to create conditions where U.S. forces remain under constant exposure to focused, full dimensional offensive action, synchronized and initiated from dispersed locations even though an enemy’s overall posture will be defensive in character.”<sup>18</sup>

In future regional conflicts, conventionally inferior adversaries are projected to aggressively confront U.S. Force conventional dominance with a near-continuous tempo of coordinated, non-decisive asymmetric operations designed to extend the conflict in time and/or space.

To counter and ultimately dominate a creative, adaptive adversary, America’s future decisive force must be capable of effective response against both conventional and unconventional forces and their capabilities employed asymmetrically. To achieve this ideal level of multi-functional capability demands that the future decisive force possess superior situational understanding and an inherent versatility and adaptability, enabling it to rapidly respond to any situation and adapt to any environment. The force must be capable of rapid strategic mobility and be able to conduct vertical and horizontal maneuver over both operational and tactical distances as well as tactical

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<sup>18</sup> Department of the Army, Training and Doctrine Command White Paper, The Future Operational Environment (Ft. Monroe, VA, 2001), 11.

and operational standoff attack with direct and indirect precision fires to support those maneuvers.

The overarching concept of employment for the future force is to conduct simultaneous and continuous, non-contiguous, distributed combined arms shaping, decisive, and sustaining operations throughout the battle area against a determined, intelligent adversary whose principal aim is to prolong the conflict and avoid decision.<sup>19</sup>

Just as individual aggressor states develop new military capabilities and strategies in response to their environment in a manner analogous to natural selection, the future operational environment demands that a new U.S. military force structure and employment doctrine evolve out of the current legacy force and doctrine or else rapidly face extinction at the hands of an adversary.

## **THE OBJECTIVE FORCE**

In October 2000, General Eric K. Shinseki, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, during a speech given to the Association of the United States Army, as well as in a statement given to Army Magazine, proclaimed the pressing need to transform America's land forces. Shinseki declared that the U.S. Army must break the cycle of history and transform itself, not reactively, in response to a future conflict which risks failure on the battlefield, but now, proactively during an unprecedented period of relative peace (the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 notwithstanding), unrivalled economic prosperity and rapid technological progress. Shinseki concluded the point prophetically, stating that the historic window of opportunity open to transform America's armed forces may have already begun to close.

Citing core objectives of the U.S. National Security Strategy and outlining growing national and transnational threats, General Shinseki described the wide range of military missions and operations that U.S. Armed Forces are required to conduct, from humanitarian and peacekeeping

missions to global conventional warfare. In light of the changing breadth, intensity and frequency of post-Cold War military requirements, General Shinseki highlighted the shortcomings of Cold War era U.S. Forces. His statements concluded that Cold War era U.S. Forces were not designed to meet the demands of the current strategic environment. In the Army's present condition, it could not conduct many of the current or the projected future military missions and operations.

General Shinseki perceived that the current situation required fundamental change, a sweeping transformation of the entire U.S. Army force structure and operational doctrine. General Shinseki's main effort in this transformation process is the creation of a future decisive force, the "Objective Force." By design, this future U.S. land force must inherently possess the military capabilities necessary to dominate the full spectrum of military operations within current, as well as projected, strategic environments. While remaining optimized for major theater war, this Objective Force must be sufficiently versatile and agile enough to handle smaller-scale contingencies, which will occur more frequently. General Shinseki's vision of a future decisive land force, is that of an "Objective Force that is more responsive, deployable, agile, versatile, lethal, survivable and sustainable than the present force."<sup>20</sup> In addition to these characteristics, he includes the following additional "operational imperatives," quantitative measures which specify that the objective force possess the ability to "place a combat-capable brigade anywhere in the world, regardless of ports or airfields, in 96 hours after liftoff, a division on the ground in 120 hours, and five divisions in theater in 30 days."<sup>21</sup>

General Shinseki has embarked on "bold and fundamental" review of how the Army organizes, mans, equips, trains and develops its leaders to execute doctrine in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As the U.S. Army's "master planner," Shinseki is responsible for initiating an overall Transformation

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<sup>19</sup> Department of the Army, Training and Doctrine Command White Paper, The Future Operational Environment (Ft. Monroe, VA, 2001), 13.

<sup>20</sup> GEN Eric K. Shinseki, "The Army Transformation: A Historic Opportunity," Army Magazine, October 2000, 16.

<sup>21</sup> GEN Eric K. Shinseki, "The Army Transformation: A Historic Opportunity," Army Magazine, October 2000, 16.

Campaign Plan designed to guide the Army over time, evolutionarily, into the Objective Force while remaining ready to meet current National Military Strategy requirements. To guide the development of Objective Force warfighting concepts, General Shinseki has distilled the principles of war, tenets of U.S. Army doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures into an overall concept restated in a few simple “rules of thumb.” First, armies win on the offensive. Second, it is always desirable to initiate combat on U.S. terms, selecting the time, place, and method of combat. Third, seize and retain the initiative. Fourth, conduct war as a seamless process that builds momentum quickly and wins decisively. Lastly, to operate in this manner, Shinseki warned that leaders must be especially skilled at transitioning, that is, changing organizations, direction and/or combat activity, actions that dissipate vital operational momentum and challenge the retention of initiative essential to Objective Force operations.<sup>22</sup>

General Shinseki conceded that U.S. Army Transformation and Objective Force development and employment are directly contingent upon dramatic advances and developments in science and technology. However, he explained that Army Transformation and Objective Force development is only one part of the overall U.S. Army Vision. Shinseki asserted that transformation is tied into the other two tenets of Army Vision, namely people and readiness. The Army Chief stressed that they are both fundamental and necessary co-conditions to facilitate Army transformation and fielding the Objective Force. In closing remarks to both Army Magazine and to the Association of the United States Army, General Shinseki emphasized that despite a seeming technological emphasis, the “Army Vision and the Objective Force concept begins and ends with soldiers. The U.S. Army is not and never has been about equipment. It is about the character, values and professionalism of its soldiers and leaders... War is still, fundamentally a brutal contest of people

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 14. see also Department of the Army, Training and Doctrine Command White Paper, Concept for the Objective Force (Ft. Monroe, VA, 2001), 11.

against people, will against will.”<sup>23</sup> The Chief of Staff’s comments reflected a clear concern that one must keep foremost in their mind the human and moral element that will be called upon to employ Objective Force capabilities and execute Objective Force doctrine. Any military solution envisioned to resolve a specific operational environment must recognize this inherent force limitation.

Echoing this requirement for a comprehensive transformation of America’s Armed Forces, the former Secretary of Defense, William Cohen, in his annual report to the President and the Congress, reiterated the pressing need for a comprehensive transformation of the entire U.S. Army to achieve the Army’s vision. In Chapter Eleven, “Strategy for Military Transformation,” former Secretary Cohen utilized identical terminology to that of General Shinseki when describing the Objective Force. Cohen stated that the “transformed [Army] force envisioned is an Objective Force that will be responsive, deployable, agile, versatile, lethal, survivable, and sustainable.” Cohen also repeated the operational imperatives, “objective measures of force responsiveness,” initially asserted by General Shinseki. “The Army will have the capability to deploy a brigade anywhere in the world ninety-six hours after liftoff, a warfighting division in 120 hours, and five divisions after thirty days.”<sup>24</sup>

The overall concept, perhaps the overall genesis for the transformation of America’s Armed Forces, however, is contained in the current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Vision (JV) 2020 document. This vision statement, as well as the vision of its progenitor JV 2010, set forth the first somewhat tangible goal for the U.S. military’s transformation as the creation of a force that is “dominant across the full spectrum of military operations – persuasive in peace,

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<sup>23</sup> GEN Eric K. Shinseki, “The Army Transformation: A Historic Opportunity,” Army Magazine, October 2000, 24. see also GEN Eric K. Shinseki, “Speech to the Association of the United States Army Seminar” Prepared Remarks November, 2001, 8.

<sup>24</sup> Department of Defense, Secretary of Defense, Annual Report to the Congress, Part III, Chapter 11: Transforming the U.S. Armed Forces, A Strategy for Military transformation, by William S. Cohen (Washington, D.C., 2001), 178.

decisive in war, preeminent in any form of conflict.”<sup>25</sup> JV 2020 and JV 2010 are authoritative statements that establish a common framework of understanding, as well as set forth the overall themes guiding the transformation of America’s Armed Forces. JV 2020 aims toward a future U.S. force that is faster, more lethal and more precise than existing forces. It asserts that these characteristics combined with the flexibility and responsiveness inherent in a joint force is the key to operational success in the future operating environment. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs overarching vision, delineated in both JV 2010 and JV2020, is of a military force that is inherently a “joint” force capable of full spectrum dominance. To form a foundation and to help guide the development of a future U.S. Armed Force, both JV 2010 and JV 2020 asserted the vital importance of four interrelated operational concepts: dominant maneuver, precision engagement, focused logistics and full dimensional protection.<sup>26</sup> The Chairman’s “Joint Vision” asserted that the interdependent application of these concepts, coupled with superior battlespace awareness enabled by advances in information and systems integration will enable U.S. forces to achieve full spectrum dominance. Though the validity of this comprehensive claim may be debatable, these characteristics provide focused guidance for the development of a future U.S. force and establish quantitative and qualitative measures with which to evaluate any future force capabilities.

The Department of the Army (DOA) as well as the Army’s Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) has released authoritative white papers that specifically address the U.S. Army’s overall construct for the Objective Force. The Objective Force is the U.S. Army’s overarching concept and framework for the conduct of future land warfare. The objective force concept encompasses all aspects of future ground force characteristics, capabilities, organizational structure and employment. “The objective force is a full spectrum force, organized, manned,

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<sup>25</sup> Department of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Vision 2020 (Washington D.C., 2000), 1.



equipped and trained to be more strategically responsive, deployable, agile, versatile, lethal, survivable and sustainable than current heavy or light forces across the entire spectrum of military operations from Major Theater Wars through counter terrorism to Homeland Security.”<sup>27</sup>

The Objective Force is an offensively oriented, organic combined arms maneuver force capable of conducting a series of simultaneous and continuous, non-contiguous combined arms operations throughout the battle area. Objective Force units will be capable of conducting operational maneuver from strategic distances, arriving simultaneously at multiple improved and unimproved points of entry. These units will overwhelm aggressor anti-access capabilities and immediately be capable of conducting simultaneous, distributed and continuous combined arms air-ground operations on any terrain throughout the battlespace. Through the exploitation of advanced technologies and information systems, the objective force will possess “dominant situational understanding,” thereby allowing the objective force to develop the situation out of contact, then executing maneuver, fire and tactical assault to quickly close with and destroy the enemy at the decisive time and place.

According to the DOA and TRADOC, a key characteristic or hallmark of Objective Force operations will be their unique ability to “develop situations out of contact; beginning engagements at tactical standoff, then executing maneuver, precision fires and tactical assault to rapidly close with and destroy enemy capabilities or locations at times and places of our choice.”<sup>28</sup> The DOA specifies that Objective Force tactical engagements will be characterized by development of the situation out of contact and the integration of standoff fires, skillful maneuver, and close combat assault to achieve tactical decision simultaneously at multiple

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<sup>26</sup> Department of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Vision 2010 (Washington D.C., 1996), 19-24; and Department of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Vision 2020 (Washington D.C., 2000), 26-30.

<sup>27</sup> Department of the Army White Paper, Concept for the Objective Force (Washington, D.C., November 2001), iv.

<sup>28</sup> Department of the Army White Paper, Concept for the Objective Force (Washington, D.C., November 2001), v. see also Training and Doctrine Command White Paper, Concept for the Objective Force (Ft. Monroe, VA, July 2001), 1.

locations across the JOA. “Objective Force tactical commands will direct continuous integration of powerful sub-elements, moving along multiple, non-contiguous axes to objective areas, while engaging the adversary with organic, overmatching and precise fires.”<sup>29</sup>

The Objective Force is composed of a technologically advanced, general-purpose military force complemented by special purpose forces. It is capable of operational maneuver from strategic distances, deploying quickly on short notice, rapidly establishing situational understanding, conducting initial entry operations through multiple points with forces able to engage and execute any mission within the spectrum of operations immediately upon arrival. The Objective Force’s agility and versatility is a result of its unique modular construction. The force structure is composed of standard, fixed base units or building blocks, each with discrete operational capabilities. This modular, building block approach results in a force that is rapidly tailorable to specific operational requirements by the addition of various mission specific modules both before and during deployment. In combination with small, mobile, internettted headquarters and multi-modal logistic forces capable of strategic and operational resupply, the Objective Force will possess unprecedented versatility and flexibility. Initial and follow-on units will be deployable in completely integrated, autonomous force packages that feature a tailored balance of combat and combat support - command and control and sustainment functions. The DOA asserts that the Objective Force’s modular structure will enable it to renounce the current “Alert, Train, Deploy” paradigm in favor of a “Train, Alert, Deploy” model utilized by today’s specialized units that tailor force packages following alert.

The DOA and TRADOC both specify that the Objective Force will exceed the lethality, speed, and staying power associated with conventional heavy forces while possessing the agility, deployability, versatility and close combat capability of today’s light forces. Advances in weaponry and munitions are projected which would enable the Objective Force to possess the capability of destroying enemy formations at longer ranges with smaller calibers and greater

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 14.

precision. Organic line of sight, beyond line of sight and non-line of sight fires, based on one shot – one kill disciplines and designs will be an inherent Objective Force capability.<sup>30</sup>

The Objective Force is optimized for decentralized, non-contiguous operations. Objective Force elements will be employed in simultaneous operations against critical points distributed across the breadth and depth of the Joint Operations Area (JOA), thereby exposing the enemy's entire mass to direct attack. It is envisioned that the Objective Force will achieve this extreme degree of maneuverability by combining rapid horizontal mobility with an organic capability to conduct vertical envelopment and air assault into a coherent combined arms task force. In contrast to phased, attrition based, linear operations, the Objective Force, operating independently or in support of committed ground forces, is focused on disrupting the integrity of the enemy's battle plan by exposing the entire enemy force to air/ground attack, rather than rolling up the enemy's force sequentially.

The Objective Force is designed to execute a wide variety of strategic, operational and tactical purposes, while simultaneously interacting with numerous political, military, interagency and non-governmental actors both international and domestic. Consequently, the Department of the Army concedes that the specific echelonment of the Objective Force is a complex question. It is one area of Objective Force development that the DOA has admitted requires further analysis and experimentation. The real world challenges and demands of span of control, sustainability, complexity of operations in an expanding battlespace, joint interoperability, as well as basic human capabilities (and limitations), remain to be resolved.<sup>31</sup>

The Objective Force is designed to conduct sustained combined arms air-ground offensive operations within the joint campaign. It is envisioned that the Objective Force units will conduct continuous operations at an overwhelming operational tempo, closing with and destroying the

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 13-14. see also Training and Doctrine Command White Paper, Concept for the Objective Force (Ft. Monroe, VA, July 2001), 10.

<sup>31</sup> Department of the Army White Paper, Concept for the Objective Force (Washington, D.C., November 2001), 17-18 (paraphrased).

enemy in simultaneous engagements designed to collapse the enemy's ability to continue any form of organized military action.

Central to the Objective Force's design, its fundamental quality, or perhaps what could be termed appropriately its core competency, is its unique ability to retain the freedom of action necessary to employ combat power at the time, place and in the method of its choosing.<sup>32</sup> The capability of coordinating simultaneous and continuous engagement by air-ground units; bringing overwhelming integrated combined arms combat power to bear directly against the enemy's Center of Gravity – critical capabilities from which the enemy derives his freedom of action, physical strength, or will to fight, is the essence of Objective Force design. The aim of the Objective Force maneuver concept is to completely overwhelm the enemy's ability to respond by rapidly executing operational strike maneuver; creating and controlling an operational tempo to a degree and extent never before achieved in the history of warfare. This revolutionary capability promises to mitigate the effects of terrain and in effect, negate the historic superiority of the defense formerly intrinsic in land combat. This is the key to fully understanding and exploiting Objective Force maneuver.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Department of the Army, Training and Doctrine Command White Paper, Concept for the Objective Force (Ft. Monroe, VA, July 2001), 11.

<sup>33</sup> There are several key enablers, technological features and combat support/sustainment issues fundamental to Objective Force design that perhaps deserve additional discussion. However, the goal of this monograph is to investigate the theoretical principles of Objective Force employment; not to debate specific technical or tactical matters. For additional specific information regarding Objective Force employment beyond the overview presented here, the reader is referred to the various U.S. Army white papers noted in the bibliography.

## **ANALOGOUS OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS**

### **THE MEANS OF COMMAND: Naval Force and the Objective Force**

#### **Objective Force VS Naval Force Operational Employment**

The fundamental, core capability of the objective force however, will be its ability to rapidly and flexibly conduct operational maneuver to a degree never before realized or achieved. This inherent revolutionary capability promises to mitigate the effects of terrain, and in effect, negate the historic superiority of the defense formerly intrinsic in land combat. This revolutionary capability of a highly mobile, multi-functional, multi-disciplinary, semi-autonomous force to maneuver as to obviate terrain's natural advantage, as if the terrain itself were featureless is decidedly analogous to the conditions of naval warfare. That is not to say that terrain can or should be discounted. Terrain largely, will always determine exactly where land forces will be operationally and tactically employed. However, the objective force commander at the operational level, may project his force and operate as if terrain posed no inherent limitation or obstacle to maneuver; in effect, as if his force moved upon a vast and featureless ocean.

### **THE OBJECT OF COMMAND**

#### **Freedom of Action**

The reader should understand that the theme, premise or underlying principle behind Objective Force design, what this author has called its core competency, is its fundamental and unique "ability to retain the freedom of action necessary to employ combat power at the time, place and in the method of its choosing."<sup>34</sup> From a very practical and theoretical standpoint, the

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<sup>34</sup> Department of the Army, Training and Doctrine Command White Paper, Concept for the Objective Force (Ft. Monroe, VA, July 2001), 11. see also Department of the Army White Paper, Concept for the Objective Force (Washington, D.C., November 2001), v and 6; with slightly different wording.

fundamental concept of freedom of action is paramount. It is not simply some useful construct, tool, or criteria with which to evaluate a course of action or to analyze the conduct of warfare. Freedom of action is the heart of the matter; it is central to operational art and key to effective Objective Force employment.

The central theme “freedom of action” and the larger concept of operational art however, have not been within the U.S. military’s lexicon until rather recently. Though WWII was a conflict of global dimensions, characterized by the global reach of the participants and replete with examples of large-unit operational maneuver, the organizational U.S. Army did not achieve a full realization or perceive fully the impact nor meaning of the operational level of war from that experience.

John Romjue, Chief of Historical Studies and Publications at the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, pointed out that following WWII, large-unit operational experience together with any integrated teaching of it faded quickly after 1945. The responsibility for this condition rested partially with the segmenting of the service roles that resulted from the 1947 National Security Act’s establishment of separate service departments, as well as the creation of a new Department of Defense in 1949. Partial responsibility also rested with the creation of the Unified Command Plan, which placed the conduct of all (land, sea and air) military operations in the various geographic theaters under the direct command of regional unified commanders. The combined effect of these factors served to focus the institutional U.S. Army away from the planning of campaigns to a more tactical orientation of planning.

Romjue also pointed out that during the Korean and Vietnam wars of the 1950s and 1960s national strategy and theater geography precluded operational maneuver. The Korean and the Vietnam Wars, with the exception of the landing at Inchon, were fought almost wholly at the tactical level.<sup>35</sup> These experiences combined a linear defensive strategy of NATO Europe, which

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<sup>35</sup> John Romjue, American Army Doctrine for the Post-Cold War (Ft. Monroe, VA: Military History Office, U.S. Training and Doctrine Command, 1996), 7.

rested upon West Germany's insistence not to trade land for maneuver space, imposed a tactical framework upon Army planners that constrained the development of operational mindedness. The result was an overall tactical orientation of the Army and tactically focused doctrine that lacked a clear conception of large-unit operational campaign.

A pivotal event in the history of the U.S. Army, the creation of the Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) in 1973, marked the beginning of the Army's journey to understand fully the central ingredient of "doctrine" and the concept of "operational art." Paul Herbert, in the historiographical account of TRADOC, its founder General William E. DePuy, and the 1976 edition of the U.S. Army's Operational Field Manual, asserted directly that the establishment of TRADOC and the publication of the capstone Field Manual, FM 100-5, Operations, under DePuy marked the "origin" of the U.S. Army's awareness of the importance of doctrine.<sup>36</sup>

Following TRADOC's inception in 1973, a discernable operational level consciousness emerged and evolved slowly within the U.S. Army and TRADOC. During succeeding years, TRADOC distilled wartime lessons, new fighting concepts, new strategic concerns, new weapons and weapon systems, to revitalize Army doctrine. The combined effects of a dispiriting strategic defeat in Southeast Asia, a new order of weapon and weapon system lethality – dramatically demonstrated in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, and a menacing, numerically superior, well-equipped Soviet/Warsaw Pact adversary catalyzed the Army to embark on a program to reorient, restructure and revitalize doctrine from top to bottom.

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<sup>36</sup> Paul Herbert, Deciding What Has to Be Done: GEN William E. DePuy and the 1976 Edition of FM 100-5, Operations (Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1988), 1 and 98. Herbert's cogent historiography of TRADOC, its energetic and forceful first leader General DePuy and the development of the Army's capstone field manual FM 100-5 fills an important void in the body of knowledge chronicling the development and growth of U.S. Army doctrine. Herbert's work, perhaps more importantly, documents the renaissance of professional, doctrinal thought and discourse DePuy and FM 100-5 created which together slowly wrought changes in Army thinking – from an attrition based warfare strategy to a more maneuver based strategy. Additional information concerning the development of U.S. Army doctrine and the Training and Doctrine Command may be found in the TRADOC sponsored historical overview, Prepare the Army for War: A Historical Overview of the

TRADOC's comprehensive overhaul of doctrine resulted in the release of its first revision to the U.S. Army's Operations Manual, FM 100-5, generally dubbed "Active Defense" in July 1976. The review process initiated by TRADOC however, sparked a process of open, continuous, vigorous debate and critical analysis. As a result of this environment of open, critical review, the Army's capstone operations manual, FM 100-5, was critically revised in May 1982, and again in 1986. A nascent operational view began to emerge in the revised doctrine, which was re-dubbed "Airland Battle." The U.S. Army had perceived gradually the operational level of war as a distinct and separate field of knowledge.<sup>37</sup> The Army view of the battlefield was extended, it possessed not only distance, but also time and resource dimensions.

This important revelation however, proved ultimately neither unique nor innovative. A consciousness of operational theory and the concepts governing the operational level of warfare had already coalesced out of Soviet military experience. The collective experiences and perceptions of Soviet military theorists such as Tukhachevskii, Triandafillov and Svechin in the vast expanse of Europe and Asia during WW I and the Bolshevik revolution resulted in an operational level consciousness as early as the 1920s. Out of their collective military experiences operational theory matured and emerged as the solution to the problems of industrialized, mass attrition warfare between nation-states.<sup>38</sup>

In the 1980s, though practical experience at the operational level of war lagged, the theoretical understanding and treatment of operational art advanced.<sup>39</sup> Two years following the U.S. Army's revised publication of Airland Doctrine, Dr. James Schneider, faculty member of the prestigious School of Advanced Military Studies at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff

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Army Training and Doctrine Command 1973 – 1993 (Ft. Monroe, VA: Office of the Command Historian, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1993) by John Romjue, Susan Canedy and Anne Chapman.

<sup>37</sup> A comprehensive treatment on the development of maneuver warfare in the U.S. Army is given in Richard Hooker's, Maneuver Warfare – An Anthology (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1993) and Robert Leonhard's, The Art of Maneuver (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1991).

<sup>38</sup> A thorough treatise of the historic development and theory of the operational level of war is examined in Shimon Naveh's excellent work The Pursuit of Military Excellence (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1997).

<sup>39</sup> John Romjue, American Army Doctrine for the Post-Cold War (Ft. Monroe, VA: Military History Office, U.S. Training and Doctrine Command, 1996), 20.



College penned a theoretical paper intended to serve as the Army's first true official textbook on "operational art." Schneider's "The Theory of Operational Art," was intended to inform and educate a wide group of military officers, from field grade through the general officer corps of the U.S. Army, as well as, the sister services and U.S. Allies, in the nature of the art of war at the operational level. In this groundbreaking theoretical treatise, which became a text for students at the U.S. Army's Advanced Military Studies Program, Schneider defined operational art as "the employment of military forces to attain strategic goals through the design, organization and execution of campaigns and major operations,"<sup>40</sup> Schneider explained how the term, operational art, had emerged as a consequence of changes in classical military strategy caused by the evolution of warfare.

In June 1991, Schneider authored another theoretical paper expanding on the earlier work. In this paper, "Vulcan's Anvil: The American Civil War and the Emergence of Operational Art," Schneider further developed and expanded his argument that the unique characteristics of operational art had emerged much earlier than the 1920s in the Soviet Union as had been generally accepted. Schneider proposed that during the American Civil War the Union Army had executed deep maneuvers and conducted distributed battles with the purpose of retaining their own and denying the enemy's freedom of action – the rudimentary characteristic of "operational maneuver." Schneider argued that U.S. Grant had "invented" operational art, as it is currently understood. As early as 1862, under the direction of Grant, operational maneuver from one battle to the next (inter-battle maneuver) caused and mitigated by technology, increasingly characterized the conduct of Civil War operations through the end of the war. In a dramatic example, the Army of the Potomac, under George G. Meade, following defeat at the Battle of the Wilderness in May 1864, at the direction of U.S. Grant, "advanced" in a deep operational maneuver around Robert E. Lee's right flank. For the first time in history, an army had executed

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<sup>40</sup> James J. Schneider, "The Theory of Operational Art" (Theoretical Paper No. 3, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, School of Advanced Military Studies, 01 March 1988), 2.

successive deep operational maneuvers and distributed battles to seize, retain or deny freedom of action, rather than to retain a positional advantage in order to annihilate the enemy in decisive battle – the classic purpose of warfare.<sup>41</sup>

In “Vulcan’s Anvil,” Schneider defined “operational art” as “the creative use of distributed operations for the purpose of strategy – where a distributed operation is a coherent system of spatially and temporally extended relational movements and distributed battles, whether actual or threatened, that seek to seize, retain or deny freedom of action.”<sup>42</sup> Schneider added depth to this concept by explaining that, analogous to the dual nature or methods of warfare, there are two orientations to this freedom of action. “Offensive freedom of action exploits the capability to direct operational force against the enemy’s capacity to wage war... conversely, defensive freedom of action seeks to preserve one’s own capacity to wage war. But unlike the classical defense, operational defense retains a positive aim in that its purpose is to exhaust the enemy.”<sup>43</sup> This logic will resound, as it is parallel to the arguments used by the British military historian and naval theorist, Julian S. Corbett, when describing maritime defensive operations. Corbett explained “the idea of static resistance is foreign to naval thought . . . the idea of mere resistance was hardly present, the idea was always to counterattack, whether upon the enemy’s force or his maritime communications. . . the essence of maritime defense is mobility and an untiring aggressive spirit rather than rest and resistance.”<sup>44</sup> Julian Corbett’s ideas and theories and their applicability to operational art and the Objective Force are to be explored in detail.

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<sup>41</sup> James J. Schneider, “Vulcan’s Anvil: The American Civil War and the Emergence of Operational Art” (Theoretical Paper No. 4, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, School of Advanced Military Studies, 16 June 1991), 38.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 64.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Julian S. Corbett, Some Principles of Maritime Strategy (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1911; reprint, Annapolis, MD Naval Institute Press, 1988), 211.

Schneider declared that “operational art” finds its fullest expression in the distributed campaign, and characterized “operational art” as the integration of multiple simultaneous and successive distributed operations in a campaign. A distributed operation, as stated earlier, being an ensemble of deep maneuvers and distributed battles extended in time and space but unified through one common aim – the retention or denial of freedom of action.<sup>45</sup> Schneider explained that operational art is a unique style of military art, with the planning, execution and sustainment of forces in temporally and spatially distributed operations all viewed as one cohesive unit.

The classical form of military art defined maneuver as typically the movement of forces to achieve positional advantage over an enemy. The purpose of maneuver was to maximize the concentration of force to achieve a decisive positional advantage prior to battle. The meaning of maneuver, however, in terms of operational art is much, much greater. Operational maneuver in this sense is the relational movement in depth that maximizes freedom of action for the destruction of the enemy’s capacity to wage war. The overarching purpose of operational maneuver is to maximize the flow of force in tempo and density, that is, to maximize “freedom of action.” Under the classical paradigm of military art, forces were maneuvered in order to fight – decisive battles were waged to destroy the enemy’s army. Under the new paradigm, forces fight to maneuver – battles are fought to retain or deny freedom of action. The entire concept of operational maneuver is aimed at achieving and maintaining freedom of action. It implied that enemy destruction could be achieved more effectively and efficiently in an indirect manner, that is, through envelopment and encirclement rather than through direct battle and attrition. As Dr. Schneider pointed out, “when freedom of action is lost, attrition ensues.”<sup>46</sup>

The work of Dr. Schneider notwithstanding, references to the key concept of operational maneuver, that is, freedom of action, however, remain conspicuously absent from many of the

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<sup>45</sup> James J. Schneider, “Vulcan’s Anvil: The American Civil War and the Emergence of Operational Art” (Theoretical Paper No. 4, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, School of Advanced Military Studies, 16 June 1991), paraphrased, stated on pg 39 and again on pg 40.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 34.

U.S. Department of Defense as well as the U.S. Army's keystone publications. Indeed, references to freedom of action are absent from the Department of Defense's Joint Publication 1-02, Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, (amended through 15 October 2001), as well as the Army's doctrinal manual of Operational Terms and Graphics, FM 101-5-1 (30 September 1997). Though the term was used to help describe tactical maneuver in the May 1986 version of the U.S. Army's Operations Manual, FM 100-5, it is noticeably absent from the Army's newest Operations Manual, FM 3-0, published in June 2001. Despite being a core tenet of operational level success and the Objective Force's maneuver concept, "freedom of action" is neither defined nor discussed in the U.S. Army's central doctrinal manuals.

This omission is a grave concern as freedom of action is the necessity upon which operational level success rests. Freedom of action is truly the key, the theoretical foundation and the framework upon which operational and Objective Force maneuver is based. Objective Force employment and maneuver is truly the fulfillment or embodiment of operational art, as such; the foremost requirement is to understand the theoretical foundation of the operational level of war; only after this may specific doctrine based on technical, environmental/geographical and cultural capabilities and limitations be developed. The doctrinal cart does not come before theoretical horse. Sound theory and principles are the foundation for doctrine. To fully understand the operational concept of freedom of action and to develop an ability to apply the concept of freedom of action to Objective Force employment doctrine, a maritime construct for the Objective Force is analyzed. It is in this treatment that analogous patterns between the proposed Objective Force and a Maritime Force emerge and become apparent.

### Command of the White Space: Freedom of Action

In 1911, the eminent British military historian and author, Julian S. Corbett, inspired by reading Clausewitz's On War, applied and extended the concepts of On War, using a systematic and logical approach, to address the specific case of maritime warfare. Using his extensive

knowledge of naval history, Corbett logically linked the general theory of Clausewitzian land warfare to the specific case of maritime warfare and the special characteristics of sea power to create the now classic text, Some Principles of Maritime Strategy. Corbett's writing is clearly in conflict and at times breaks completely with the works of earlier military theorists. Throughout Corbett's work there is an unmistakable attempt to come to grips with "operational art." Though Corbett never used this contemporary term, the subject matter is the same: "that area between strategy and tactics which translates strategic vision into successful activity of forces in space and time, constrained by logistics and the power and ambition of the enemy."<sup>47</sup> It is specifically this matter, Corbett's analogous treatment of the operational concept, freedom of action, as it applies to maritime forces that is of prime importance to this study.

According to Corbett, as well as fellow naval theorist, Alfred T. Mahan<sup>48</sup>, the central or golden principle of sea power – the "object" of naval warfare was to "control the sea." To both theorists, the idea of "control" was central. Control always flowed from a greater strategic purpose and was the direct result of either the destruction or neutralization of the enemy fleet by some means. It is important to note the similarities of both theorists. The object of naval warfare, according to both theorists, was not always the explicit destruction of the enemy fleet, but rather control over it by some means. Corbett however, expanded on this basic principle of naval warfare. Corbett's "Theory of the Object – Command of the Sea" stated that "the object of

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<sup>47</sup> The independent opinion of this author as well as the editors of the Classics of Sea Power series, John B. Hattendorf and Wayne P. Hughes, as quoted from their remarks in the preface to Julian S. Corbett's, Some Principles of Maritime Strategy (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1911; reprint, Annapolis, MD Naval Institute Press, 1988).

<sup>48</sup> Naval theorist, Alfred T. Mahan, published the now classic treatise, The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783, in 1890. In this comprehensive historical account, Mahan demonstrated the connections between general history and naval history. In short, Mahan showed that events at sea dramatically affected events ashore. Indeed, this central theme and its corollary, that sea power is an indispensable ingredient for great nations proved self-fulfilling as his ideas had a great impact on influential leaders of the era, including Theodore Roosevelt and Kaiser Wilhelm II.

naval warfare must always be directly or indirectly to secure command [control] of the sea or to prevent the enemy from securing it.”<sup>49</sup>

Mahan saw naval warfare as strictly a matter of control of the sea; control is gained exclusively through the destruction or neutralization of the enemy fleet. Corbett by comparison, saw naval warfare as a deeper matter of exercising command, that is the controlling of maritime communications – or using a contemporary analogous term from ground operations, pursuing freedom of action. Corbett explained that the normal condition at sea is that no party has command, that is, the normal state of affairs is not a commanded sea, but an uncommanded sea. Corbett pointed out how “command of the sea” is inherently different from the conquest of territory – at least in the traditional sense. One cannot simply seize or conquer sea because it is not susceptible to ownership, at least not outside territorial waters.

A lawyer would explain this condition by arguing that since neutrals cannot be excluded from conquered territory, one cannot reduce the sea to a possession. On land each party possesses proprietary communications in private territory respectively, whereas, upon the sea the means of communications are common to all participants. Control of the sea does not imply the occupation of any fixed point, as on land, because that is not feasible or physically possible. Control in this sense denotes the ability to move across the seas without interference or unhindered and, conversely, implies the ability to prevent or obstruct an opponent’s movement.

The contemporary military scholar, theorist and historian, Herbert Rosinski, also helped to illuminate Corbett’s concept by explaining the fundamental nature of command. Rosinski wrote perceptively that “what we wish to command or to control is not ‘the sea,’ but our opponent, or the neutrals; [and] it is precisely because we cannot ‘reduce’ the sea ‘into possession’ that there is the delicate and difficult problem of the neutral and his rights to be faced

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<sup>49</sup> Julian S. Corbett, Some Principles of Maritime Strategy (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1911; reprint, Annapolis, MD Naval Institute Press, 1988), 91.

in naval warfare.”<sup>50</sup> The strategic and operational consequences of this difference between exercising control and having possession are vital. In the future operating environment, on the land and on the sea, communications will be common to all belligerents as well as neutrals. Combat will be noncontiguous; there will be no fixed lines. In this environment, strategic and operational offense and defense will tend to merge in a manner that is unknown in the traditional conduct of land warfare. The important implications of this special condition in which communications are common to all are that an opponent cannot attack an adversary’s communications without concomitantly conducting a defense in kind.

Corbett expounded on the meaning and importance of the concept of “command of the sea” by explaining that as a result “the only right we or the enemy can have on the sea is the right of passage; in other words, the only positive value which the high seas have for national life is as a means of communication.”<sup>51</sup> It is important to note here what Corbett meant by communication. Corbett was not simply referring to military lines of supply and retreat; he was referring to a much broader operational and strategic context of a nation’s organic ability to flow forces and commerce or resources unimpeded. Corbett was writing about freedom of action – the central concept. Command of the sea, according to Corbett, is control of the seas, or of the maritime communications upon the sea for a specific purpose – whether commercial or military. The traditional object of naval warfare then is the control of maritime communications, whereas in land warfare, the object has traditionally been the control and conquest of territory. This fundamental difference, due to the inherent capabilities and limitations of the forces involved, has shaped the nature of operations thus far – that is, at least until a land force was developed with the advanced operational capabilities that, in essence, allow it to discount terrain and to maneuver unrestricted like a ship upon a vast ocean.

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<sup>50</sup> Herbert Rosinski, The Development of Naval Thought (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1977), 4.

<sup>51</sup> Julian S. Corbett, Some Principles of Maritime Strategy (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1911; reprint, Annapolis, MD Naval Institute Press, 1988), 93.

The Objective Force is an offensively oriented, combined-arms maneuver force, capable of conducting simultaneous, non-contiguous combat operations, continuously throughout the battle area. It is designed to conduct operational maneuver from strategic distances - by combining rapid horizontal maneuverability with organic vertical envelopment and air assault, the Objective Force is able to arrive anywhere, on any terrain and strike directly against the enemy's mass. As a result, the historic advantage of terrain can be mitigated by the Objective Force's operational and tactical mobility. In effect, just as Corbett had pointed out that the only positive value that the seas can hold for a maritime force is as a means of communication – Objective Force characteristics and maneuver design infer that the only positive value that terrain can hold for a future Objective Force is as a means of communication. It was noted earlier exactly what Corbett meant by “communication.” Corbett was not simply referring to military lines of supply; he was referring to a broader operational and strategic context of a nation's ability to flow forces, commerce or resources unimpeded. It is analogously important to note what Objective Force characteristics and maneuver design means by communication. Communication, or the control of communication, is not just the ability of an Objective Force commander to control ground communications or to possess an ability to maneuver military forces freely (freedom of maneuver). Communication denotes a much broader, deeper quality – the ability to exercise freedom of action.

Objective Force commanders must adopt an approach to terrain that is analogous to that of maritime commanders dealing with maritime communications. In short, the capabilities of the Objective Force and the demands of the future threat require that Objective Force commanders adopt an operational approach to terrain that is analogous to the approach maritime commanders employ to command the sea. Command of the sea is the ability to control maritime communications, and denotes the ability to exercise freedom of passage. By analogy, command of terrain, or more specifically in this case, command of the white space, is the ability to control land communications in the white space between units, and denotes the ability to possess and



exercise freedom of action. The object of naval warfare is command of the sea; analogously, the object of Objective Force land warfare must become command of the white space, that is, command of the normally uncommanded terrain that is between friendly units.

Objective Force commanders must break with a historic paradigm. They must eschew what they have historically held as an inherent strength, terrain, in favor of vigorous, continuous operational movement. In the future warfare the object is not terrain per se; it is control of land communications through freedom of action. It is only through movement and vigorous activity that control of communications is exercised. Just as a ship, static alongside a pier is highly vulnerable to attack and destruction, a future force that associates itself with a fixed terrain feature or position will be highly vulnerable to attack and defeat. The reader must keep in mind that the Objective Force is not a heavy, armored force. The inherent ability of a Future Combat System (FCS) envisioned for the Objective Force, to absorb combat effects are physically not as great as that of a conventional armor (M1A1 Abrams) centric force; however, its ability to rapidly maneuver and to avoid those effects in the first place are much greater. At the same time, the area of influence/combat power of the Objective Force is much greater per unit than that of any contemporary unit. Consequently, its neutralization will have a much greater effect on the overall operation. The Objective Force must move and maneuver to fight and survive.

The object of the Objective Force must be to control communications, that is, to possess and exercise freedom of action. The assertion above deserves repeating; it is only through movement and vigorous activity that freedom of action is exercised effectively. If an Objective Force affiliates or associates itself with any fixed position, it will in effect abandon its strengths and concede the initiative to the enemy. The Objective Force (in effect) would surrender its ability to control communications and concede freedom of action.

## THE METHODS OF COMMAND:

### The Force In Being

It was noted that strategic and operational offense and defense tend to merge at sea. In an analogous manner, the creation of a revolutionary land force with the unique characteristics and capabilities of the Objective Force, will force them to merge in an analogous fashion on land as well. It is this merger of operations, formerly a characteristic of maritime warfare, that is of vital importance. The U.S Army's proposed Objective Force differs inherently from any conventional land force in the history of warfare. The Objective Force is distinct structurally, organizationally and possesses unique capabilities and characteristics that are unlike today's conventional forces. These features demand a unique approach to operations and presage a condition wherein the distinction between strictly offensive and defensive operations is blurred. The Objective Force will rarely conduct purely offensive or defensive operations; rather, the force will have both offensive and defensive concerns simultaneously. It is a state of affairs where the traditional offense – defense paradigm does not apply, so their distinction will matter less. Offensive operations will require commensurate defensive measures and defensive operations will generally require offensive operations.

Julian Corbett provides the following concept for the term defense... “Both on land and at sea defense means taking certain measures to defer a decision until military or political developments so far redress the balance of strength that we are able to pass to the offensive.”<sup>52</sup> Corbett also points out that according to the traditional understanding of the term, in regard to the operations of armies, defense generally entailed the holding of fixed, fortified positions - terrain that afforded an advantage to the defender and requiring or allowing a superior enemy to exhaust their strength by attacking those positions in order to achieve their objectives. It is clear that the

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<sup>52</sup> Julian S. Corbett, Some Principles of Maritime Strategy (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1911; reprint, Annapolis, MD Naval Institute Press, 1988), 211.

traditional notion or paradigm of defense is predominantly one of fixed positions and fortifications. The advantage afforded a weaker party by the inherent strength of defensible terrain allows a weaker force the ability to refuse or even defeat a stronger force through astute, perceptive planning and operations. In future conflicts however, the projected threat combined with corresponding Objective Force characteristics dictate that Objective Force units fight for freedom of action. Operations that are characterized by movement and maneuver in a non-contiguous, distributed manner, rather than a traditional linear manner. A maritime analogy is helpful to illustrate this concept.

On land, traditional defensive operations are centered around using fixed, fortified positions to weaken and attrit a stronger opponent. At sea, the traditional aim of defensive operations is to avoid decisive action, that is, to maintain defensive freedom of action or initiative. The aim was always to preclude either destruction or defeat by a superior opponent through vigorous strategic, operational and tactical activity. Corbett explained the concept simply by asserting that the essence of naval defense is “mobility, not rest.”<sup>53</sup> The goal is to keep a “fleet in being until the situation develops in our favor.”<sup>54</sup> The method achieving this goal was by continuous dispute and challenge to the enemy’s control of communications; by provocative operations and actions designed to exercise control at any time or any place as opportunity provided thus preventing the enemy from exercising control in spite of numerical superiority.

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 209 – 226. The term and concept of a “fleet in being” developed out of Corbett’s extensive knowledge and analysis of naval history. Though gaining recognition and significance through Corbett, the term/concept was first articulated by (Admiral) Arthur Herbert, Earl of Torrington, (who became one of Great Britain’s First Lord of the Admiralty). Lord Torrington originally expressed the term “fleet in being” in a personal statement to describe and defend his tactical design and employment strategy in combat action against the French fleet in 1690. Corbett, understanding the significance of Lord Torrington’s statements and the tremendous importance of the concept, seized upon the terminology and incorporated the concept to help develop a cogent body of maritime theory, Corbett’s now classic Some Principles of Maritime Strategy.

Corbett boldly declared, “the idea of mere resistance was hardly present, the idea was always to counterattack, whether upon the enemy’s force or his maritime communications. . . the essence of maritime defense is mobility and an untiring aggressive spirit rather than rest and resistance.”<sup>55</sup>

Corbett maintained the idea of static resistance was, and it is still, foreign to naval thought. Corbett expounded upon these assertions by explaining that any fleet withdrawn into a fortified base or restricted waters, that is, a position of static resistance was effectively neutralized or removed from the board. Quite conversely, in traditional land operations, any army holding key terrain was acting positively to exhaust its enemy and redress an unfavorable balance of combat power. A static army may control or even possess the object of the conflict, usually terrain, for a period. A static, inactive fleet however, withdrawn into a fortified base, permits the enemy to carry on positive operations, exhausting the static fleet and leaving open to the enemy the ultimate object of war – control of sea communications.

Julian Corbett stressed that command of the sea however, is not a zero-sum proposition. If an opponent loses or does not possess command of the sea command does not necessarily or automatically go to an adversary. Corbett pointed to the error in assuming that if one is unable to win command of the sea, one therefore automatically loses it. The statement is erroneous because it, in effect, neglects or ignores strategic or operational defensive operations at sea. The statement also ignores the fundamental fact that the normal state or condition is of an uncommanded sea, that is, for command of the sea to be normally in dispute. If an adversary is too weak to exert or win command by offensive operations, the adversary may yet succeed in holding command in dispute by avoiding general action and assuming an active defensive attitude until by alliance or otherwise, has generated sufficient combat power to permit a resumption in offensive operations.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 211.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 209.

Julian Corbett clearly and succinctly summarized the concept of the “fleet in being” in the following passage:

The doctrine of the ‘Fleet in Being’ as formulated and practiced by Torrington... goes no further than this, that where the enemy regards the general command of the sea area as necessary to his offensive purposes, you may be able to prevent his gaining such command by using your fleet defensively, refusing what Nelson called a regular battle, [a decisive engagement], and seizing every opportunity for a counterstroke.<sup>57</sup>

The concept of a naval force commander intent on maintaining a “fleet in being,” is analogous to an Objective Force commander who must aim to maintain a “force in being.” By exercising mature, critical judgment in selecting the time, place and method of combat, Objective Force commanders must preserve the combat power of their force while continuously disputing and challenging the enemy’s control of the white space. Objective Force commanders must analogously conduct reasoned operations intended to exercise control at any time or any place as opportunity provides, and to prevent the enemy from exercising control in spite of superiority, until the situation develops favorably.

The “object” of maritime operations is command of the sea, that is, control of maritime communications, while the traditional “object” of land operations has been the seizure of key terrain. Non-contiguous, asymmetric, Objective Force operations based on movement and maneuver against future threats however, are fundamentally different from traditional land operations. These new characteristics and methods of land operations require a new “object” to focus operations. This new paradigm requires that Objective Force commanders, 1) Eschew the traditional object of land warfare, the seizure of terrain, and embrace as their object, command of the white space - the aggressive pursuit of freedom of action, and 2) Adopt the “force in being” construct as their prevailing employment paradigm.

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 224.

## The Concentration and Dispersal of Forces

Concentration in this context is analogous to the historic land warfare “principle of mass.” According to the U.S. Army’s Field Manual (FM) 101-5-1, Operational Terms and Graphics, the definition of mass is “to concentrate or bring together fires, as to mass fires of multiple weapons or units.” According to the U.S. Army’s Operations Field Manual, FM 3-0, the principle of mass is the “concentration of the effects of combat power at the decisive place and time.” Julian Corbett described similarly the traditional view of military strategy – which, at that time, was referred to as concentration, as the method of “assembling the utmost force at the right time and place.”<sup>58</sup> Corbett however, declared that the traditional concept of concentration was in conflict with an essential element or quality of strategic deployment – that which is the antithesis of concentration, namely, dispersal. An essential concern element of strategic, operational and tactical deployment is to maintain and enhance flexibility in the choice of a course of action – what Corbett referred to as a view to a choice of flexibility and movement; a choice of combinations. Corbett explained that the whole ideal of a massed army is rigid; fixed, with restricted mobility and implied an object that is distinctly at odds with the ideals or principles of concealment and surprise.

Corbett reasoned that: “once the mass is formed, concealment and flexibility are at an end. The further, therefore, from the formation of the ultimate mass we can stop the process of concentration the better designed it will be. The less we are committed to any particular mass, and the less we indicate what and where our mass is to be, the more formidable our concentration.”<sup>59</sup> With this glaring contradiction in mind, Corbett argued that a better concept or view of concentration and dispersal were required. Given the characteristics of naval warfare, Corbett proposed that the concept of concentration be viewed analogously to a “compound

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 128.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 131.

organism controlled from a common center, [and yet] elastic enough to permit it to cover a wide field without sacrificing the mutual support of its parts.’<sup>60</sup> Corbett concluded that,

The [fundamental] object of naval concentration, like that of strategic deployment, will be to cover the widest possible area, and to preserve at the same time elastic cohesion, so as to secure rapid condensations of any two or more of the parts of the organism, and in any part of the area to be covered, at the will of the controlling mind; and above all, a sure and rapid condensation of the whole at the strategic center.<sup>61</sup>

In Corbett’s view, the requirement for absolute concentration must be subordinated to an absolute requirement for flexibility. This inherent maneuver and flexibility centered concept of concentration would permit a commander the ability to exercise control of the sea (control of communications) without compromising or prejudicing the overall ability to concentrate the right force, at the right point, at the right time; thereby securing permanent control of communications. Corbett reasoned that distribution must be dictated ultimately by the need to satisfy a variety of requirements (combinations) and to protect a variety of objectives simultaneously. Concentrations conversely, must remain commensurately as dispersed and flexible as conditions will allow within these constraints.

The concept of concentration implies an inherent cognitive tension, a continuous conflict between cohesion and reach. The balance or apportionment between these two competing interests is an essential element of operational art – in the contemporary understanding. This concept comprised the greater part of what Corbett referred to as practical strategy.

Corbett discussed the inherent differences between contemporary land warfare and maritime warfare. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the differences were fundamental. Corbett highlighted the restricted nature of land warfare’s lines of movement, the lower intrinsic mobility compared to naval units, the difficult, time-consuming, cumbersome processes of assembly and concentration... In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century however, the capabilities of the Objective Force make

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 132.

the differences between contemporary land warfare and maritime warfare appear much more indistinct.

Corbett vigorously pursued the logic surrounding the concepts of concentration and mass. Corbett reasoned that the “idea of massing, as a virtue in itself, is bred in peace and not war. It indicates the debilitating idea that in war we must seek rather to avoid than to inflict defeat.”<sup>62</sup> Most importantly, Corbett advocated, as a corollary to any argument involving concentration vs. dispersion, that military victories are only earned via bold strategic combinations – which, as a rule, entail at least an appearance of dispersal. Corbett concluded that “these can only be achieved by taking risks, and the greatest and most effective of these is division. . . without division no strategical combinations are possible. In truth they must be founded on division.”<sup>63</sup> Corbett argued firmly regarding concentration and dispersion that “risks must be taken. . . If we risk nothing, we shall seldom perform anything.” Corbett was convinced that the mark of a great leader was in their ability to perceive correctly the allowable breadth of a deployment that it capable to stretch a concentration. The adjustment of the tension between concentration and dispersion - cohesion and reach, was to Corbett the ultimate test of judgment, which in the conduct of war takes the place of what Corbett called “strategical theory” – which is analogous to a contemporary term – “operational art.”

Corbett discussed, analyzed and refuted concentration (mass) at great length. Using numerous historical examples, Corbett explained that the danger of division is being surprised and forced to fight at a numerical disadvantage, however, it is only through astute division that an enemy can be either tempted or forced outright to concentrate, thereby creating the opportunity to defeat the enemy in detail. Corbett explained clearly that “by inducing the enemy to mass that we simplify our problem and compel him to choose between leaving us to the exercise of command

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 134.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.



[control of the white space] and putting it to the decision of a great action.”<sup>64</sup> Corbett was the first to proclaim emphatically that the traditional aphorism, “concentration begets concentration,” was contradicted unequivocally by historical records. Corbett explained the point vigorously – “if we are too superior, or our concentration too well arranged for him [the enemy] to hope for victory, then our concentration has almost always had the effect of forcing the enemy to disperse his force for sporadic action.”<sup>65</sup>

Writing in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Julian Corbett, vigorously and soundly rebutted the faulty logic of focusing on the main body or mass of the enemy as the “ultimate” and decisive “object” of naval warfare. Writing in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, Robert Leonhard, retired U.S. Army officer and contemporary military theorist, rebuked similarly the entrenched “principle of mass” in land combat. Leonhard wrote categorically and unequivocally that “mass is not a valid principle of war in the Information [contemporary] Age. . . [and] at the operational level of war. . . we can regard the utter uselessness of mass as a principle to fight by. . . mass is inaccurate and totally misleading.”<sup>66</sup>

Leonhard offers a compelling argument, refuting and discrediting the historical basis for belief in the ideal of the principle of mass. Dissecting the logic of the classical principle of mass, Leonhard argued that the classical definition does not reflect the realities of, and cannot aid in the understanding of, contemporary warfare. Weapon and weapon system precision, advances in command and control; situational understanding, make the traditional definition for the principle of mass unsuitable on the contemporary battlefield. Leonhard explained that commanders traditionally employed the principle of mass to compensate for uncertainty, but today’s high volume, long range, accurate weapon systems that possess the ability to achieve one or more kills with a single shot negates traditional mass logic. In Leonhard’s words, “mass no longer equals

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 138.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Robert R. Leonhard, The Principles of War in the Information Age (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1998), 94 and 115 – 116.

killing power. . . precision will replace mass in proportion to our ability to minimize uncertainty.”<sup>67</sup>

Refuting the logical tents surrounding the entrenched principle of mass, Leonhard explained that advances (increasingly) in the mobility of forces have negated the need to mass. The rapid mobility enjoyed by today’s contemporary forces, as well as the dramatic advances in mobility promised to be realized by future “objective force” units negates the need to concentrate forces. Leonhard reasoned that at some point, a significant mobility advantage must remove the inherent necessity to mass. The rapid mobility and firepower (killing power) of Objective Force units negates the inherent need to physically mass to achieve effects. Leonhard explained the entire matter succinctly.

Due to advancements in weapons technology, modern armies have exceeded the critical ratio of one man killing an average of one or more opponents, thus invalidating the proposition that mass equals [or is a necessary precondition to achieve] killing power. We are heading toward unprecedented mobility in our future warfighting capabilities, [read: Objective Force capabilities] thus removing the necessity for mass to find and overlap enemy flanks or other weaknesses. Likewise, the requirement for masses of soldiers or combat vehicles to compensate [or mitigate] for uncertainty is an anachronism, because information technology is significantly improving our ability to see the battlefield with precision. That same technology is facilitating non-line-of-sight command and control to a degree never before imagined, removing mass as a necessary means to enhance a commander’s control of subordinates.<sup>68</sup>

Leonhard also rejected the contemporary ideal of “massing effects” or “fires” – a redefinition or reinterpretation of the traditional principle of mass. Leonhard considered the notion of “massing effects” rather than the traditional physical massing of forces nothing more than a clever semantic ruse within U.S. Army doctrine. Claiming the idea “smacks of pedantry,”<sup>69</sup> Leonhard maintained that the “principle of massing effects” seemed more a mechanism designed to provide a simple, universal, dogmatic, doctrinal solution to any operational or tactical problem, while simultaneously offering a convenient, fail-proof method to

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 102 and 106.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 115.

<sup>69</sup> Robert R. Leonhard, The Principles of War in the Information Age (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1998), 118.

affix fault to any past conflict. Leonhard ultimately condemned the idea of massing effects as too vague for practical application and wholly analogous to advising a commander that “winning is good.”

There is a fundamental dichotomy inherent in the nature of any mass vs. mobility logical argument. The principles of mass and mobility are inextricably linked to the physical world – since the physical laws of nature are inviolate, a paradox arises. Leonhard’s writings recognized this connection and the inherent tension, a dilemma that requires a commander to choose between two competing forces. To achieve true mobility one must eschew any emphasis on mass; to achieve mass, one must ultimately eschew mobility.

# CONCLUSIONS

## Discussion

Maritime Strategy and Land Strategy do not exist in discrete and separate spheres of knowledge, that is, they do not exist as independent areas of study, rather, they are merely divisions in the overall art of war. As a result, military officers: army, navy, marine, air force, to be true professionals, must study and thoroughly understand the overarching art of war in addition to any particular field in which they specialize. Professional military officers must first develop a keen understanding of the general theory of war to determine and understand thoroughly the nature of the conflict. To assume ignorantly that one method of conducting war will universally suit all kinds and types of war is tantamount to raising theory to the level of dogmatic prescription – and to, as Julian Corbett puts it, “fall victim to abstract theory and not be a prophet of reality.”<sup>70</sup>

It is apparent that technological advances are increasingly blurring any distinction between the tradition divisions in the art of war – between land, sea and air warfare. The divisions are less distinct, increasingly interrelated and integrated.

By an analogy to maritime operations, two constructs or paradigms have been proposed to help guide the development of doctrine in the theoretical employment of the U.S. Army’s Objective Force.

1. The “object” or goal of Objective Force warfare is command of the white space, in other words, “freedom of action.” Objective Force commanders must act to retain and preserve freedom of action. This must be the theoretical basis for all doctrine.

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<sup>70</sup>Julian S. Corbett, Some Principles of Maritime Strategy (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1911; reprint, Annapolis, MD Naval Institute Press, 1988) 28

2. The corollary of this is to preserve the “force in being.” Objective Force commanders must employ maritime concepts to understand and govern the reasoned concentration and dispersal of forces.

In combination, the concepts are related thusly, the core object or goal of Objective Force warfare is to control, that is, to exercise and retain ones freedom of action... this is the essence of the maritime concept “fleet in being.”

The arguments presented throughout are based on the existence of an analogy between naval and Objective Force land warfare. The premise that an analogy exists between land and naval forces under certain conditions however, is certainly neither new nor profound.

In 1920, an article by the esteemed British officer, Lieutenant Colonel T.E. Lawrence, declared plainly an apparent analogy. The article, titled “The Evolution of a Revolt” appeared prominently in Britain’s Army Quarterly and Defense Journal, was a first-hand, summary account of the Arabian revolt against the Turks in 1916. Lawrence’s historical narrative of that conflict, its characteristics and conditions, analogous to naval warfare, has proven incredibly prophetic to what contemporary theorists would define as unconventional and asymmetrical warfare.

LTC Lawrence characterized asymmetrical operations by unconventional indigenous forces (aided by British equipment and advisors) against the Turks on the Arabian Peninsula in 1916 thusly:

In character these operations were more like naval warfare than ordinary land operations, in their mobility, their ubiquity, their independence of bases and communications, their lack of ground features, of strategic areas, of fixed directions, of fixed points. ‘He who commands the sea is at great liberty, and may take as much or as little of the war as he will’<sup>71</sup>: he who commands the desert is equally fortunate. Raiding-parties, as self-contained as ships, could cruise without danger along any part of the enemy’s land frontier, just out of sight of his posts along the edge of cultivation, and tap or raid into his lines where it seemed fittest or easiest or most profitable.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Attributed to Francis Bacon’s work Of the True Greatness of Kingdoms and Estates, 1597, but not cited: “...but this much is certain; that he who commands the sea is at great liberty, and may take as much and as little of the war as he will. Whereas these, that be strongest by land, are many times nevertheless in great straits.” Dictionary of Military and Naval Quotations (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1966), 288.

<sup>72</sup> T.E. Lawrence, “The Evolution of a Revolt,” Army Quarterly and Defense Journal 1 (October 1920): 64.

Lawrence did not intend to use descriptive prose to be colorful or eloquent. Lawrence concluded, through first-hand experience, that the conditions and characteristics of the conflict, the conduct of operations, the environment and the capabilities of the Arab land force appeared analogous to the conditions of naval warfare. If one were to substitute the words “Future Combat Vehicle” for the word “camel” in Lawrence’s writings, the article would sound almost as contemporary as any Army transformation or Objective Force concept statement produced by TRADOC (less many adjectives).

T.E. Lawrence was not alone. Major General J.F.C. Fuller, British military theorist and prolific military writer, frequently employed a naval analogy to describe modern mechanized warfare in his lectures and writings. Fuller, a product of the bloody stalemate that characterized WW I, wrote copiously, most notably during the interwar period on the future of mechanization and armored warfare. Fuller stated explicitly: “in areas where tanks [future combat vehicles] can move freely we must divorce our minds completely from present-day tactics, for fighting will be very different.”<sup>73</sup> Fuller believed that in a mechanized future “battles will take on a naval complexion. . . naval battles would resemble closely what future battles on land will probably look like.”<sup>74</sup>

According to the British historian, Brian Holden Reid, perhaps the clearest description of Fuller’s vision of the analogy between mechanized warfare and naval warfare was recorded in a lecture to the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) in 1920. Fuller wrote:

I see a fleet operating against a fleet not at sea but on land: cruisers and battleships and destroyers. . . there appears an aeroplane [carrying]. . . the Commander-in-Chief. . . Suddenly I see the fleet is moving a few points north-east; the Commander-in-Chief has spoken to it by wireless telephony. . . The Tanks submerge; that is to say, batten down their hatches. The battle begins. Out go the minesweepers; we are in the enemy’s land. A series of detonations show the act was not executed a moment too soon. The enemy’s

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<sup>73</sup> J.F.C. Fuller, Lectures on Field Service Regulations Vol. III, (Operations Between Mechanized Forces) (London: Sifton Praed and Co., 1932) 15.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. In this reference, Fuller explained that “ships fight on the sea and are based on the land, [whereas] tanks fight and are on based on the land only.” Fuller theorized that if a fleet’s defended ports and harbors could follow warships at sea, the analogy to their land counterpart, the tank, on the modern battlefield would correlate directly.

fleet concentrates their fire on the gaps made. The Commander-in-Chief is again talking. A small squadron moves to the north, tacks east, and huge clouds of smoke pour across the sky. New gaps are made and the fleet moves through. I see an old scene re-enacted – the contest between armour, gun-fire and mobility.<sup>75</sup>

Fuller, unlike T.E. Lawrence, was effusive and eloquent – a visionary, deliberately trying to evince strong images, evoke the human imagination and stimulate change.

A more contemporary military theorist, CAPT (ret) Wayne P. Hughes, USN, offered an intriguing comparison between contemporary naval and land warfare in the seminal naval text Fleet Tactics and Coastal Combat. While examining the problems and issues surrounding a universal set of “Principles of War,” Hughes contrasted land combat to naval combat. Hughes illustrated the issues by referring to a widely accepted set of fundamental operational features of land warfare developed by COL (retired) Trevor Depuy.

COL Depuy, a WW II combat veteran, highly regarded military theorist and author of numerous books and articles, notably the classic Encyclopedia of Military History, believed that the fundamental features or concepts of warfare remained constant throughout time. As a result, in Depuy’s noted text on military theory titled Understanding War, Depuy identified thirteen “unchanging” operational features or concepts of warfare. Albeit perhaps a somewhat Jominian approach to the development of military theory, Depuy dubbed these thirteen operational features as the “The Timeless Verities of Combat,”<sup>76</sup> and stated they were “not a substitute for the Principles of War, with which they have something in common. . . [but rather as] certain fundamental and important aspects of warfare, which, despite constant change in the implements of war, are almost unchanging because of war’s human component.”<sup>77</sup>

Hughes selected Depuy’s concepts or features because Hughes considered them thoroughly developed objective constructs, fully representative of land warfare. Hughes recounted Depuy’s operational features or concepts and then added what Hughes believed their

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<sup>75</sup> Brian Holden Reid, J.F.C. Fuller: Military Thinker (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1987), 61.

<sup>76</sup> Trevor N. Depuy, Understanding War (New York: Paragon House, 1987), 1-8.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

naval counterparts to be – in this manner contrasting vividly the similarities and differences between contemporary land and naval warfare.

The salient differences identified by Hughes are apparent and understandable, but the similarities are notable. What is even more striking, if one were to adjust Hughes' comparisons, taking into account a land force with Objective Force characteristics and capabilities, that is, a land force which possessed a high degree of speed, mobility, agility, sustainability and situational understanding not yet inherent in a contemporary land force. The inherent strength of the defense is effectively negated and the disparities between naval and land warfare all but disappear...

Wayne Hughes' contemporary land vs. naval warfare comparison chart has been provided in the Appendix, as table A-1. A second comparison chart, table A-2, provided for the reader's consideration, has been based on Hughes' original comparison, but includes additional comments to compare and contrast Objective Force warfare concepts against contemporary land and naval warfare.

If the proposed analogy between the Objective Force and naval force has been shown sufficiently reasonable, logical and valid, the question remaining then is can naval warfighting concepts be applied analogously to Objective Force warfighting and employment? In other words, do maritime or naval concepts offer utility to Objective Force commanders? It was stated in the introduction that if concepts and theories are to be of value, they must offer useful predictions of the future. In other words, do maritime concepts provide reliable, utilitarian guides, citing the salient factors that must be evaluated, necessary to arrive at a desired endstate or result?

Maneuver warfare was developed broadly to counter and defeat the inherent strength of the defense on land. Operational maneuver was the solution to industrialized, mass attrition warfare between nation-states. Objective Force maneuver is the embodiment and realization of operational maneuver, the basis of which is the exploitation and retention of "freedom of action." Freedom of action must therefore be the essential, core criteria in any concept or theory that



applies to or governs Objective Force employment. Evidence has substantiated the analogy between the characteristics of naval forces and Objective Forces. Theoretical and conceptual reasoning and arguments have demonstrated that freedom of action, that is, control of maritime communications or command of the sea has been the central construct in maritime strategy as well. The analogous core criteria, freedom of action, demonstrate that maritime concepts may be applied confidently to Objective Force employment.

Assuming the inherent capabilities of the Objective Force are achieved; given the projected characteristics of the future operating environment... If maritime concepts were applied to Objective Force employment, the resulting operational actions would be consistent, as envisioned, to address and counter effectively the future threats in the future operating environment.

## Recommendations

The early part of the twentieth century was a period of rapid technological change, mass industrialization and production. In the context of this dynamic environment two prescient military thinkers warned theorists of the dangers inherent in the business of developing and applying military theory.

Julian S. Corbett declared in Some Principles of Maritime Strategy that “nothing is so dangerous in the study of war as to permit maxims to become a substitute for judgment,”<sup>78</sup> . . . and warned that maxims must not be permitted to displace well-reasoned judgment, or as Corbett put it, a maxim must not “be permitted to shut the door to judgment.”<sup>79</sup>

J.F.C. Fuller similarly admonished listeners and readers in Lectures on Field Service Regulations Vol. III, asserting that “adherence to dogmas has destroyed more armies and lost

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<sup>78</sup> Julian S. Corbett, Some Principles of Maritime Strategy (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1911; reprint, Annapolis, MD Naval Institute Press, 1988), 167.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 169 – 170.

more battles and lives than any other cause in war. . . [and that], no man of fixed opinion can make a good general.’<sup>80</sup>

Theory drives doctrine. In order for theory and the doctrine that follows to remain current, relevant and of utility, theory must remain open to vigorous discussion and debate. The Objective Force proposals advocated and championed at TRADOC and the highest levels of the Army must open to vigorous debate and scrutiny throughout the entire Army. For just as forged steel gains strength and resilience through tempering, Objective Force concepts must experience all manner of review, criticism and even scorn. An environment of open, honest review and debate develops only through the affirmative actions of top leadership. The establishment of organizational climate, culture and values is a top-down process – it is the responsibility of senior leaders. The Army’s senior leaders at TRADOC and Army headquarters must commit the resources, time, money and manpower to establish active, responsive methods necessary to inculcate and internalize the value of professional discourse/debate throughout the U.S. Army.

Objective Force concepts must be reviewed openly and debated vigorously across every branch and organizational level in the U.S. Army. An independent forum must be established to coordinate the resources and organizational effort necessary to create an effective Objective Force dialogue.

Objective Force methods of employment, “doctrine,” must be based on more than proposed and/or projected technological capabilities. The U.S. Army is putting the doctrinal cart before the theoretical horse. Though the Army has arguably developed credible, realistic projections of the future threat and the future operating environment, it has applied these projections to develop doctrine not theory. Objective Force studies, reports, and proposals state specifically “how” the Army’s future force will be employed against a future projected threat, but there is little to no theoretical basis, no “why.” The Army view seems to point toward the future threat as the basis,

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<sup>80</sup> J.F.C. Fuller, Lectures on Field Service Regulations Vol. III, (Operations Between Mechanized Forces) (London: Sifton Praed and Co., 1932) x.

however, theory is not based on enemy characteristics and capabilities alone. Theory develops by identifying causal relationships among the variables analyzed – it is a utilitarian statement of a causal relationship. Recognition of this disconnect is key to a solution.

The only discernable theoretical basis or “object” to Objective Force concepts appears to be General Shinseki’s “rules of thumb” for warfighting:

We will win on the offensive. We want to initiate combat on our own terms – at a time and place of our choosing. We want to gain the initiative and never surrender it. We want to build momentum quickly. We want to win decisively.<sup>81</sup>

GEN Shinseki’s declarations are enumerated in almost every TRADOC Objective Force concept statement and have been carried forward to guide development of the Objective Force. Shinseki’s edicts appear however, somewhat sophomoric. They are, admittedly, “rules of thumb...” universally applied to every situation without deeper understanding could lead to failure and defeat. Rules of thumb do not provide a theoretical basis for warfighting or answer fundamental theoretical questions such as: What is the object, the means, and the method of future Objective Force warfare?

The Army Chief of Staff, GEN Shinseki, also established discrete characteristics for the Objective Force. The Army Chief proclaimed the Objective Force must be: responsive, deployable, agile, versatile, lethal, survivable, and sustainable. However, GEN Shinseki defined these characteristics as merely “more” than that possessed by the current force. This reiteration of existing characteristics only as “more” of what the current active force possesses is pedantic. It provides no theoretical foundation with which to develop theory or doctrine.

Senior Army leaders must eschew a technological centric approach and focus on basic questions of warfare. Against the context of the future threat and future operating environment, senior leaders must ask fundamental questions such as: What are the causal relationships in future

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<sup>81</sup> GEN Eric K. Shinseki, “The Army Transformation: A Historic Opportunity,” Army Magazine, October 2000, as well as Department of the Army, Training and Doctrine Command White Paper, Concept for the Objective Force (Ft. Monroe, VA, July 2001), 11.

warfare? What is the “object” of future Objective Force warfare? What is the means of Objective Force warfare? Finally, What are the methods of Objective Force warfare?

Many of the Objective Force concept statements seemed to ignore or at least forget Carl von Clausewitz’s famous edicts of fog and friction in war, and to deny the reality of the old military adage “the enemy gets a vote.” Apparently, with perfect knowledge of enemy disposition, strength, terrain and intention, the Objective Force has effectively “rigged” the voting process.

Objective Force concepts have great merit, but much of the rhetoric could fail in the face of the realities of warfare. Maritime strategy and concepts offer insights into Objective Force operations and employment particularly when information is less than perfect or force ratios are less than favorable. Maritime warfare concepts can provide U.S. Army commanders with a useful construct to assist in the development of Objective Force employment doctrine. Instead of applying a procedural or prescriptive approach to Objective Force warfare, maritime concepts and constructs can provide U.S. Army commanders with a conceptual, descriptive approach to understand Objective Force warfare.

It was noted in the introduction that Samuel P. Huntington, perhaps the world’s most eminent political scientist, declared in response to critics of controversial theories and ideas contained in the epic The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order, that “the test of its meaningfulness and usefulness is not whether it accounts for everything... Obviously, it does not. The test is whether it provides a more meaningful and useful lens through which to view international developments than any alternative paradigm.”<sup>82</sup>

A similarly pragmatic approach should be applied when developing and analyzing military theory. If maritime concepts and principles provide a meaningful and useful lens through which to view Objective Force operations and employment, they should be adopted without hesitation and without bias.

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<sup>82</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 13-14.

## APPENDIX

**COMPARISON TABLE A-1: CONTEMPORARY LAND VS SEA WARFARE**

<b>Land Warfare</b>	<b>Naval Warfare</b>
1. Offensive action is essential to positive combat results.	This is true of sea battle.
2. Defensive strength is greater than offensive strength.	Defense is usually weaker.
3. Defensive posture is necessary when successful offense is impossible.	Defensive posture is inherently risk-prone and subject to incommensurate losses.
4. Flank or rear attack is more likely to succeed than frontal attack.	Attack from an unexpected quarter is advantageous, but the concept of envelopment has no parallel.
5. Initiative permits application of preponderant combat power.	Initiative is especially valuable at sea.
6. A defender's chances of success are directly proportionate to fortification strength.	Defensive power is solely to gain tactical time for an effective attack or counterattack.
7. An attacker willing to pay the price can always penetrate the strongest defense.	This is true of sea battle, given the wherewithal.
8. Successful defense requires depth and reserve.	At sea, setting aside a reserve is a mistake.
9. Superior combat power always wins, if one takes into account the value of surprise, relative combat effectiveness, and the advantages of defensive posture as elements of strength.	When the appropriate qualifications are considered, it is possible to say that superior force will always win at sea. However, it is better to say that when two competitive forces meet in naval combat, the one that attacks effectively first will win.
10. Surprise substantially enhances combat power.	This is true of sea battle.
11. Firepower kills, disrupts, suppresses, and causes dispersion.	This is true of sea battle.
12. Combat activities are slower, less productive, and less efficient than anticipated [from peacetime tests, plans, and exercises].	While this is often true, there are many examples of naval engagements in which results come much more swiftly than expected.
13. Combat is too complex to be described in a single simple aphorism.	This is true of sea battle.

Table A-1, has been taken from Wayne P. Hughes, Fleet Tactics and Coastal Combat.<sup>83</sup> The reader may refer to Trevor Depuy's Understanding War, chapter one, "The Timeless Verities of Combat," for a thorough description and explanation of each of Depuy's thirteen fundamental warfare concepts upon which this comparison table is based.

<sup>83</sup> Wayne P. Hughes, Fleet Tactics and Coastal Combat (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2000) 172 – 173.

**COMPARISON TABLE A-2: CONTEMPORARY LAND VS SEA VS  
OBJECTIVE FORCE WARFARE**

<b>Land Warfare</b>	<b>Naval Warfare</b>	<b>Objective Force Warfare</b>
1. Offensive action is essential to positive combat results.	This is true of sea battle.	This is also true of O.F. warfare, but sustained, vigorous defensive actions results in positive combat results and can lead to overall operational & strategic level success.
2. Defensive strength is greater than offensive strength.	Defense is usually weaker.	Traditional defense is also usually weaker. Defense is no longer inherently stronger – any fixed (massed) position/fortification is vulnerable to defeat in detail due to the power and precision of modern weapon systems. Defensive strength is created by the ability to maneuver. The force with greater mobility and freedom of action is stronger.
3. Defensive posture is necessary when successful offense is impossible.	Defensive posture is inherently risk-prone and subject to incommensurate losses.	A traditional defensive posture is also inherently risky – O.F. units would be susceptible/exposed to defeat in detail. The concept of a defensive posture for O.F units is one of vigorous activity – continuously dispute and challenge the enemy while actively maintaining defensive freedom of action and preserving the force in being.
4. Flank or rear attack is more likely to succeed than frontal attack.	Attack from an unexpected quarter is advantageous, but the concept of envelopment has no parallel.	Attack from an unexpected, unprepared quarter will be de rigueur for O.F. warfare.
5. Initiative permits application of preponderant combat power.	Initiative is especially valuable at sea.	Initiative will also be de rigueur for O.F. warfare.
6. A defender's chances of success are directly proportionate to fortification strength.	Defensive power is solely to gain tactical time for an effective attack or counterattack.	This is true of O.F. warfare. Defensive operations are intended solely to defer a decision until military or political developments redress the balance of combat power and permit a transition to offensive operations.
7. An attacker willing to pay the price can always penetrate the strongest defense.	This is true of sea battle, given the wherewithal.	This is also true of O.F. warfare – but is an unnecessary sacrifice if the practitioner understands the characteristics, capabilities and the nature of O.F. warfare.
8. Successful defense requires depth and reserve.	At sea, setting aside a reserve is a mistake.	This is also true of O.F. warfare. Use of a reserve is the result of not understanding fully O.F characteristics, concepts and the nature of O.F. maneuver. A reserve results in sub-optimization; wastes valuable combat power and would be imprudent given the nature of O.F. warfare.

<b>Land Warfare</b>	<b>Naval Warfare</b>	<b>Objective Force Warfare</b>
9. Superior combat power always wins, if one takes into account the value of surprise, relative combat effectiveness, and the advantages of defensive posture as elements of strength.	When the appropriate qualifications are considered, it is possible to say that superior force will always win at sea. However, it is better to say that when two competitive forces meet in naval combat, the one that attacks effectively first will win.	This is also true of O.F. warfare. However, the naval aphorism “the one who attacks effectively first will win,” will be particularly critical as the amount of combat power per O.F. unit is extremely high by comparison to contemporary Army units making the defeat of each or any one unit a critical event. To understand this concept one must understand and think in terms that the true measure of an O.F. unit’s effective combat power or force effectiveness is its net delivered combat power over the combat life of the force.
10. Surprise substantially enhances combat power.	This is true of sea battle.	This is also true of O.F. warfare -
11. Firepower kills, disrupts, suppresses, and causes dispersion.	This is true of sea battle.	This is also true of O.F. warfare.
12. Combat activities are slower, less productive, and less efficient than anticipated [from peacetime tests, plans, and exercises].	While this is often true, there are many examples of naval engagements in which results come much more swiftly than expected.	This is also generally true of O.F. warfare, however, O.F. concepts recognizes J.F.C. Fuller’s observation that “time is the controlling factor in war” <sup>84</sup>
13. Combat is too complex to be described in a single simple aphorism.	This is true of sea battle.	This concept is manifest in O.F. warfare.

Table A-2, originally from Wayne P. Hughes, Fleet Tactics and Coastal Combat, has been adapted to include concepts and comments representing Objective Force warfare.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Brian Holden Reid, J.F.C. Fuller: Military Thinker, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1987), 49. Cited as originally appearing in Fuller’s paper “The Tactics of the Attack as Affected by the Speed and Circuit of the Medium ‘D’ Tank.” (A paper given to GEN, Sir H. Wilson and Winston Churchill in June 1918.), is in FP I/208/TS/50.

<sup>85</sup> Wayne P. Hughes, Fleet Tactics and Coastal Combat, (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2000), 172 – 173.

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